

LOW'S
POPULAR SERIES

THE WHITE WIFE

WITH OTHER STORIES

BY CUTHBERT BEDE



LONDON:

SAMPSON LOW, SON, AND MARSTON,

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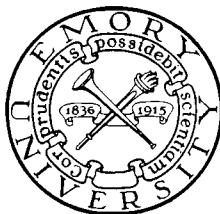


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THE WHITE WIFE;
WITH OTHER STORIES.





THE WHITE WIFE.

THE WHITE WIFE;

WITH OTHER STORIES,
SUPERNATURAL, ROMANTIC AND
LEGENDARY;

COLLECTED AND ILLUSTRATED
BY CUTHBERT BEDE,
AUTHOR OF "VERDANT GREEN," "GLENCREGGAN,"
"A TOUR IN TARTAN LAND," ETC.



CHEAP EDITION.

LONDON:
SAMPSON LOW, SON, AND MARSTON,
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1868.

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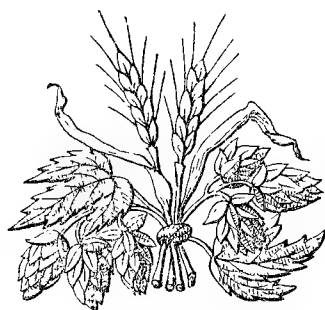
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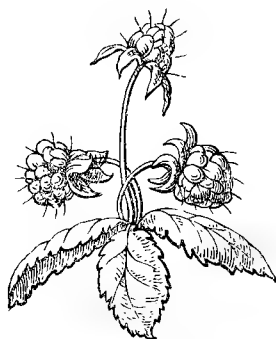




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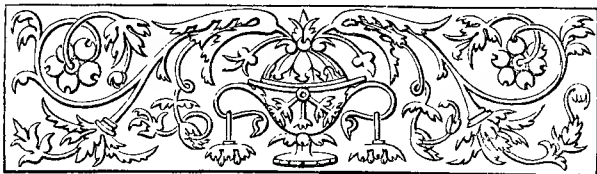
TO THE READER.



THE stories in the present volume have been collected during the past four years (chiefly through the medium of Gaelic-speaking natives) from that very interesting Western Highland district, Cantire, or “Land’s-end,” as its Gaelic name implies—the long and narrow peninsula of South Argyleshire, of which I had much to tell my readers in “Glencreggan.” These

stories are here published for the first time, and none of them are to be found in the four volumes of “ Popular Stories of the Western Highlands,” by Mr. J. F. Campbell.





THE WHITE WIFE.

A LAND'S-END GHOST STORY.



IN the morning of New Year's Day, old style, in the year 1802, I attained the age of eleven; and, in company with other boys, looked forward to the celebration of the day with peculiar pleasure. For it was the custom for all the juveniles in our Western Highland town to hail the morning of New Year's Day with enthusiastic joy, and, having previously prepared torches of tar and old nets, to amuse themselves with perambulating the streets at a very early hour in the morning, flourishing their torches as long as they could keep them alight. This was done before day-

break, and was accompanied with a great deal of noise and shouting, so that the slumbers of the townspeople were greatly disturbed thereby, and many of them would arise from their beds and remonstrate with the boys, or would even come forth from their houses and give them chase ; but this proceeding was considered to heighten the sport, and never made matters any the quieter.

On New Year's morning, at the date mentioned, I had been round the streets with the other boys, and had continued with them until all the fuel for my torch was expended, when I left them and returned home. My father had proposed to go on business, at an early hour that morning, to a farm-town called Ranochan, which was a walk of about four miles. I petitioned to accompany him ; and he consented, on condition that I went to bed for a couple of hours before we started on our walk.

It was barely daylight when we set out ; but, after we had walked two miles, the landscape began to show its features in the early light of morning. There was neither snow nor frost ;

for we had had an unusually mild and green Christmas, and the morning was quite warm for the season, with a light rain and thin mist. I followed my father a short distance in the rear, indulging myself by playing as I went along, throwing stones into the dyke, or at birds, as boys are wont to do. We had passed west of the site upon which Achanleek mill was afterwards erected, and I was looking on the south side of the highway, when I observed the appearance of a woman walking lightly along the margin of the little stream that was about twenty yards from the highway. She was dressed in white clothes, though they were not of a pure white, but were somewhat sullied—a circumstance that raised the idea in my mind that she had been wandering all the night among the marsh and moss. She appeared to be carrying a child at her breast, its little form lapped over and covered with a white robe. The woman was advancing in the same direction with ourselves, and walking parallel with us along the bank of the stream by the highway.

Although her white figure looked somewhat sepulchral, as seen through the thin mist and

by the dim light of daybreak, yet I felt no terror at the sight; for I imagined her to be some poor wandering creature who had been exposed to the inclemency of the night; but, with my young heart smitten with pity, I grieved that a mother and her babe should begin their New Year in such a sad cheerless way. Ceasing from my play at stone-hurling, I watched the poor woman as we walked side by side together—my father being some twenty yards or more in front—and thought that if she asked charity, I could give her some copper money that I had in my pocket. Though I could not discern her features very distinctly, yet I could see that she had a fair young face, but looking pinched and wan, with very rich hair, like to that you will often see among our Western Highland women. She did not look towards me, but kept her eyes steadily fixed on a point before her, and walked firmly on, as though anxious to proceed on her journey. The little stream flowed on for some sixty or seventy yards further, parallel with the highway, and then made a sudden bend to the road, which spanned it by a bridge. We walked

level with each other almost up to this bridge, and I was watching her movements—though she never once regarded me—when, as she came along the bank by the bend of the stream, and while my eyes were fixed upon her, she suddenly disappeared. I at once thought that she had fallen into the stream, and immediately ran to the spot, calling out at the same time to my father, that the poor woman had got into the water.

But, although I had reached the spot in two or three seconds, yet I could not see anything of the woman, nor could I see any such disturbance on the surface of the water, as would necessarily have resulted from any body falling into it. The bank was perfectly bare and devoid of any bushes or place of concealment; and yet there was no vestige of the poor woman. My father had at once come running up, and had looked into the stream, but could not see anything. He questioned me on the business; and I was astonished when he told me that he had not seen the woman, although he had looked round several times to ascertain if I was following him; and he said that if any woman had been there,

that she could not possibly have escaped his observation, the thin mist and rain not being sufficient to obscure objects at that short distance. He was beginning to laugh at my fancies, as he called them, when he suddenly paused, and told me to come away quickly and follow him to Ranochan, for that he was losing his time. Of course, I obeyed him; and he continued quite mute and serious, until we had come to the houses of Kilmichael. He then said to me, "Did you ever hear of the White Wife?" I said, "No." And he said, "To think that I should take this way on New Year's morning." I was curious to learn what he meant; but it was not till I was older that he made me acquainted with the story, although I have also heard it from the lips of others, by some of whom the apparition that went by the name of "The White Wife," had also been seen.

She was a young girl whose beauty had attracted the attention of the son of a well-to-do farmer; and the young man had paid his vows to her, and had secured her affections. He wished to marry her; but his father would not listen to this, considering

the girl to be far beneath him, and setting his desires on his son's mating with the daughter of some needy laird. The father, at length, got the son to his way of thinking; and, as the girl's virtue was too strong to permit the young man obtaining her for his own way except by marriage, he deceived her by a false ceremony, and persuaded her to keep their secret, and to live in her father's house as she had hitherto done, until such time as he might be able to disclose their marriage to his father. To this the girl agreed; and, though the young man's visits brought down upon her many remarks that were very hard for her to bear, yet she bore with them all under the belief that she was a lawfully-wedded wife, and that before long she should be able to clear her reputation and to live comfortably with her husband.

Notwithstanding much that was adverse, she therefore felt very happy for some time, and looked forward to the future with trustful confidence. But, after six months, the young man slackened in his visits, and was for ever making excuses why he could not come to see her; and, by quick degrees, his visits became more rare, while his manner on those occasions became rougher and less loving,

although there was now a cause why he should have shown her more affection, even if he could not comply with her often-urged request, to proclaim their marriage to their friends. Some weeks had passed without her seeing him or hearing from him, when her great trouble fell upon her, somewhat before the time, and her child was born. It was a fine lusty lad that was thus born to its heritage of guilt and shame. Her father was a pious man, but stern and unbending; and he vowed to turn his daughter and her brat out of his doors so soon as ever she was upon her feet again. In her despair, but more to save her child than herself, she told her father of her secret marriage.

The old man went up to the farmer's house, and told him how his son was wedded to his daughter. The farmer was furious, for, to all appearance, his son was on the point of being united to the daughter of a retired sea-captain, who had settled near to our town. He ordered the old man to quit his house; charged him with falsehood and defamation of character; said that he was not answerable for his son's escapades; that young men were but young men; that there was no marriage, and that he would

have the old man before the Sheriff for attempting to extort money. But it was in vain that the farmer swore and threatened, for the old man would not be put off until he had seen the farmer's son. The young man, it seemed, had gone to see his new lady-love, but, at that moment, came riding back in company with her father, the sea-captain.

Before the farmer could prevent him, the old man stepped forth to them, and saluting the son, said, "My daughter, your wife, has been put to bed of a lad."

The young man was fairly taken aback, and stammered out to the sea-captain a very sorry explanation, that the old man was in liquor, and that his daughter was no better than she should be.

"My girl is what thou hast made her," said the old man; "and, as you have made her your wife in the sight of God, you shall take her as such before the eyes of men."

"The man speaks fair," said the sea-captain. "If he has got the truth, you are not the young man that I took you for, and my daughter will be well rid of your company." And, with that, although the farmer bade him stay, the sea-captain

turned him back to Campbelton, until the young man could give him a better explanation.

The farmer and his son and the old man remained at dispute for some time, but the latter would not leave him until the young man had promised to come down to him on the morrow, and bring the proofs of his marriage. When he had got this promise, he went back to his daughter, who was greatly comforted to hear the news, and to know that on the morrow her husband would own her for his wife, and her child for his bairn.

The morrow came, and brought with it the young man, the farmer's son. The girl welcomed him with a loving smile, and tried to hold up their babe for him to kiss ; but he roughly pushed it back upon the bed, and said, " As you have forced this upon me, let us get over the business without delay." And then, to her horror and dismay, he told her that their marriage was no marriage at all, but was all a pretence, and that he was not legally bound to her in any way ; and that, on the ensuing New Year's Day he was going to take to wife the daughter of the sea-captain. The poor girl did not give so much as a cry or shriek ; but the tidings crushed

the life out of her for a time, and she fainted. When she came to herself again, the young man had gone, having agreed that the father should meet him at the place where the pretended marriage had taken place, and there be certified as to its illegality. The old man still thought that the farmer's son was putting a deception upon him in this matter, and that the wedding had been a full and binding one ; but the poor young girl felt that she had been deceived, and gave up all hope.

When the old man met the farmer's son, and when, against his own inclinations, it had been fully proved to him that there never had been a real legal marriage between his daughter and her lover, he struck him, in his fury, with his staff, and would have done him more mischief if he had not been forcibly restrained by those present. He threw back the gold pieces that the young man had given him for the child's support, spurning them with the same contempt that he spurned their giver ; and said, "I came for honest actions, not for foul insults." The farmer's son took up the gold, and put it into his pocket, with a laugh, saying, "It will serve to purchase the wedding-ring for New Year's Day."

And he went away, telling the old man that if he pleased he and his daughter might come and dance at the wedding. Then the old man knelt down, and uncovering his head, and laying his hand upon a Bible, took an oath, so solemn and yet so awful that I dare not repeat its words ; but they supplicated for maledictions and curses on the approaching union, and on any who might be born of it. I may here say, that, although the marriage took place on New Year's Day, as appointed, and, although the wedded couple lived together nearly forty years, yet that no child was ever born to them ; and that it was said that this very circumstance led to great bitterness between them, so that they passed their days in wrangling and misery. If such was the case, the young girl whom he had so grossly deceived was avenged ; and for her and for her babe the childless farmer's son would willingly have given all his wealth.

The old man had no need to break the news to his daughter, for she had already experienced, in the great bitterness of her misery, that she had been made a by-word and no wife. Although her father had threatened, that if such were the

case, he would turn her and her babe out of doors, yet he softened to her, now that he knew how grossly she had been deceived by her lover, and he tended her with all the care that her mother would have shown to her, had she been alive.

As Christmas Day passed and New Year's Day drew on, the young mother slowly gathered strength ; but, while she did, she also appeared to be settling her mind to some conviction on which she was pondering day after day. What this was could only be conjectured ; for she never confided it to her father or to any living being. But, whatever it may have been, this only is certain, that in the grey mist of the early morning of New Year's Day—that day on which the father of her babe was to be married to another—she quietly let herself out of the house, without disturbing her father, and, with her child in her arms, took her way towards the farmer's house. I cannot tell whether or no her purpose was to go thither and obtain an interview with her lover, and, with her own and their babe's eloquence, to plead with him to do his duty by her, and not to stain himself

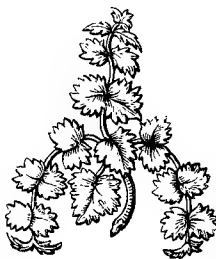
with further sin by marrying another in preference to herself ; nor can I tell whether she was drawn on that fatal road by some irresistible fascination that she was powerless to resist ; nor can I tell whether, despairing of all hope in the success of her journey, she, in a moment of madness, plunged herself and her child into the cold waters of the little stream, wherein their dead bodies were found ; or, whether she had over-reckoned her scant store of strength, and her limbs had failed her when she reached that spot, and so, in her fainting state, she fell down the bank and was drowned ; or whether, again, as others surmised, she had faltered in her path in the dim uncertain darkness of the early dawn, and had thus accidentally fallen into the stream. I cannot tell which, if any, of these conjectures and suppositions may be true ; but this is all that is surely known for a fact, that the father awoke betimes in the morning, and found his daughter's bed deserted ; that he tracked her footsteps through the hoar frost until he had come to a certain place on the bank of a stream that ran for some distance parallel to the highway ; and that, just where it

made a sudden bend towards the bridge by which the road crossed the stream, there the foot-tracks ceased ; that, searching into the water, the unhappy father discovered the body of his daughter floating in the stream, her eyes wide open, and a smile upon her lips. She was so like life, that, at first, he fancied she breathed ; but he was too quickly undeceived ; she had been dead and cold for some time ; and so also was her babe, whom she had clasped tightly in her last embrace. She had nothing on but her nightclothes ; and this fact would seem to show that her mind was wandering when she took such a walk on such an inclement night. Ever after this it was said, and universally believed, that her spirit revisited the scene of her sad fate on every anniversary ; and, that those who were abroad at that spot, at a certain hour in the early morning of the New Year's Day, would see her white figure, traversing, with her babe, the narrow path on the bank of the stream, until it had arrived at the place where it made the bend towards the bridge, when the white figure would suddenly disappear and would not be seen again until the next New Year's

Day. This was the story that was well known and credited : and the poor girl's spectre went by the name of "The White Wife."

How can I disbelieve it—I, who myself was a witness to it? I am an old man now, and have passed the threescore and ten years that are allotted to man, and I was but a boy of eleven when the White Wife appeared to me ; yet, if I were to live for centuries, I should never be able to chase the memory of that apparition from my mind, or to disbelieve the actuality of its presence before me on the morning of that New Year's Day. Young as I was at the time of its appearance to me, yet, even then, I reflected very seriously upon the event. Had I seen a spirit? Why did the White Wife appear to me? Could I have been deceived ; and was it an ocular deception like the mirage in the dreary desert? Was it the effect of a heated imagination? But no, this could not have been the case, for there had been nothing to excite me, and a ghostly apparition was the last thing in my thoughts. Did it appear to me in order to teach me something, and with some purpose in view? Perhaps so ; for, years after this,

when, in the hot blood of youth, I might have been led into sin and error, I have been arrested in my purpose by a sudden memory of the apparition that was revealed to me on New Year's morning, and of the tragic history of that poor deceived young mother—the White Wife.





THE YOUNG HERD AND THE KING'S DAUGHTER.

THE Western Highland popular stories, or *Sgeulachdan*, were as various in style as in subject, according to the period to which they referred. The older Ossianic legends, and the *Seanachas na Feinne*, or History of the Feinne, being filled with heroes and warriors, whose manners and actions and modes of life were a curious mingling of traditionary history and the actual experience of the tale-tellers. These legends vie in popularity with the more modern anecdote, and with the records of Highland chieftains and notabilities, which the lapse of two centuries has even now invested with semi-mystic attributes and overladen with extraneous incidents.

The following story contains a Cantire version of "St. George and the Dragon;" but has its characteristic peculiarities. It is called—





THE YOUNG HERD AND THE KING'S DAUGHTER.



CERTAIN Fisherman and his wife had a brave family of twelve sons ; and they all lived together in a house by the sea ; and the Fisherman fished every day, and he always caught fourteen fish, which was one apiece, for they were fourteen in family. Now it happened on a day that the Fisherman and his wife were in the house together, and their twelve sons were abroad, save the youngest, who had curled himself up by the peat fire, and was sitting among the ashes. But the man and his wife were not to see him ; and they talked freely to each other, and gave no heed to the lad.

“What is it that is on thy mind?” said the wife.

“I am thinking that I catch a great many fish every day,” said the husband; “and that if it were not for our twelve sons, we should have abundance for ourselves.

“Yes,” said she; “but I have a likely plan in my head, if thou wilt follow it.”

“What manner of plan is it?” said he.

“It is to put the twelve lads to sleep in the old kiln,” said she; “and when they have gone to sleep, then we will set fire to it; and so we shall get rid of them all.”

“We will do that!” said he. But they did not think that their youngest lad was curled up by the fire, and paying attention to all they said.

Then, at night, the twelve sons of the Fisherman were put to sleep in the old kiln, and their parents went to the house. But the youngest lad was not for sleeping; and he woke the others, and told them what he had heard when he was curled up by the peat fire. So they all got up, and drew away some distance from the kiln; and, presently, they saw the kiln all in a blaze; so they

knew that their parents intended to do away with them. Then they went away sadly; and they walked on till they came to a place where twelve roads met, and there they sat down, and consulted together what they should do.

Then said the eldest, "Let us each one take a road, and go our own way; and, at the end of seven years, when this day shall come round again, let us all meet in this place, if we are alive."

They agreed to that; and they each went their own way down the twelve roads.

It was days that the youngest lad had travelled till he got him a master, who employed him to herd cattle; and the master was well pleased with him, and showed him kindness. Now the land was under spells; for, every seventh year, there came a great Dragon, and took away the eldest daughter of the King of that country; and the time was drawing nigh for the Dragon to come; and the people were very sorry, for the King's daughter was fair and amiable, and beloved in the realm. So the King issued a proclamation, that any man who slew this Dragon should get

his daughter to wife, and should be the King's son-in-law. Many took it in hand to kill the Dragon; and among them the young man the herd.

On a day, the warriors were all assembled upon the shore—for the Dragon was to come swimming upon the sea—and the King's daughter was taken to the shore to meet him; for, if she was not there to meet him, the Dragon would kill everyone until he could get at the King's daughter. Then they saw in the distance the Dragon swimming upon the sea; and he splashed the water like a great whale, and he roared like a thousand bulls; and when they saw him, all the warriors ran away as fast as they could. Then there were only the young herd and the King's daughter left upon the shore.

"I would lay my head in thy lap," said the young herd.

"Why wouldst thou lay thy head in my lap?" said the King's daughter. "The Dragon is coming, and thou wilt fall asleep."

"O let me sleep awhile," said the young herd, "until the Dragon shall come. And if I do not

awaken in time, thou shalt clip with thy scissors the top off my little finger."

"Then thou shalt sleep," said she.

So he laid his head in her lap, and went to sleep. And all this time the Dragon was drawing nearer; and his splashing was like a thousand whales, and his roaring like ten thousand bulls. And when he came close to the shore, the King's daughter thought it was time to rouse the young herd. And his head was in her lap, and she tweaked him many times, and cried, "Wilt thou not awake? the Dragon is upon us!" But he was sleeping on. Then she saw that he was under spells; and she remembered her of her scissors. So she took them out, and clipped the top off his little finger.

And the young herd awoke; and the Dragon was upon them. And he grasped his shining sword, and stood up, and faced the Dragon. It was a long fight, and it went hard with the young herd, and his sword was covered with blood.

"I myself would rather die, than that thou shouldst perish, thou young man!" said the King's daughter.

"If I am to get thee to wife, I will be worthy of thee!" said the young herd.

Then they were long at the combat. And the young herd's sword was for making more blood; and he struck it under and over the Dragon, and thrust it into his heart. And the Dragon's life



went out with a great smoke; and the young herd sharpened his sword, and cut off his head. And when the warriors saw that the Dragon was dead, they ran back to the shore, and made great rejoicings that the King's daughter was saved. And they led her back to the King in triumph, and told him that the Dragon had been slain.

And the King was glad to get his daughter again.

Now the young herd had gone back to his flock ; and not a word said he to his master about the Dragon and the King's daughter.

Then the King asked who it was that had slain the Dragon. And seven of the warriors drew nigh ; and they each claimed the King's daughter, for the slaying of the Dragon.

And the King's daughter gave a laugh, and she said, "It was none of these. These are the warriors that fled for safety, because they are old "

"I perceive, then," said the King, "that these are cowards ; and that the Dragon was slain by a youth."

The King's daughter said that it was even so. Then all the young men came forward ; but there was not one among them who had slain the Dragon, though many said so. Then the King sent out a proclamation that all the youths in the realm should come before him. And they came ; and the young herd was among them. Then said the King's daughter, "Hold out your

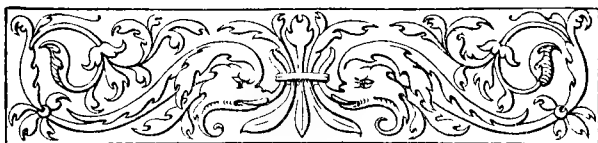
hands!” and she walked by and looked at them. And when she came to the young herd, she perceived that the top of his little finger had been clipped. So she said that he was the man; and they got themselves married; and the King made a great rejoicing.

Now, in the midst of his joy, the young herd had well-nigh forgotten his promise to his brethren. So, as the time had nearly come, he got himself a swift steed, and he rode away till he came to the spot where the twelve roads divided. And there he found his eleven brethren, and they were all weeping, for they thought that the youngest of them was dead. Then he made himself known to them, and told them how he had slain a Dragon, and gotten a King’s daughter to wife.

And the brethren told him what had befallen them; and they amused each other for some time. Then they proposed to go and see if their parents were alive; but that they would not let themselves be known unto them. So they went, and they found them alive. And their parents told them, “We had once twelve sons; but they are all dead. And since they died, we have never

aught more than two fish whenever we have gone a fishing.” So they left the old people ; and they came back to the twelve roads ; and each went his own way ; and the young herd went home to the King’s daughter.





CONNAMARRA'S WOOING.



T was in the olden days when the beautiful maiden Connamarra was beloved by the two youths Lergan and Fengal. In her heart of hearts she favoured Fengal; but it became necessary that she should bring both of them to an open trial for her hand; and it was agreed, that whoever of them won the day, should be allowed to marry the maiden in peace, without incurring further enmity from his rival. The trial that was chosen for them by Connamarra was this. At the mouth of the loch was a rock over which the sea dashed in white foam; starting from the shore, Lergan and Fengal were to take their *currachs** (boats)

* The *currachs* (the *vimenei alvei* of Solinus) were made of wicker, covered with hides. But the name continued

round the rock, and whoever of them, on their return, first touched the shore with his hand, should win Connamarra for his bride.

On a day they came to the trial. They stripped for the contest, that the currachs being lightened, might fly the swifter over the waves. But Fengal took with him his heavy battle-axe; and, when Connamarra saw this she feared that its burden would weigh against the stroke of Fengal's oars. Then she watched them from the beach, and marked how their light currachs danced over the waters, springing forward with rapid bounds as the oars lashed the spray. Fengal was the first to round the rock; but Lergan drew close upon him. Fengal strained every nerve; but, though he laboured exceedingly, Lergan's currach passed by him, and led the way to the shore. Connamarra's

after the vessels were enlarged and improved, and had been supplied with keels and a light mast, like those British currachs spoken of by Julius Cæsar. St. Columba's currach (according to Adamnan) had sails and oars, and could carry passengers, and remain for fourteen days out at sea. Tradition says that it was forty feet in length, and its rude model is pointed out in a rocky heap on the shore at Iona, called *Port-na-currach*, "the bay of the boat."

heart sank within her at the thought of soon being claimed as Lergan's bride.

Then Fengal seized his battle-axe, and, with one blow, cut off his left hand at the wrist; and, seizing the severed hand, he hurled it over Lergan's head. Then, just as Lergan was about to spring on shore, he saw the hand fall before him on the beach; and the voice of Fengal was heard saying, "Connamarra is mine; for it is my hand that has first touched the shore!" And Lergan yielded the maiden, and strode away, heavy at heart.

But Connamarra went to her lover; and, with her own robe, she staunched his blood, and bound up his limb. And Fengal said, "'Twere better that the hand should bleed, and not the heart." And thus he won his Connamarra.





THE BLACK THIEF AND HIS APPRENTICE.



T was a long time ago, when *An Gadaidhe Dubh*, “the Black Thief,” perambulated Cantire with his Apprentice.

Now, these thieves were not punished by law ; but, rather, were respected on account of their ingenuity and dexterity ; and the only preventative was, for every person to take care of his own goods and cattle. Indeed the thieves were often praised for their courage and activity ; and they seldom failed in obtaining their prize.

One day, when the Black Thief and his Apprentice were on their avocation, and were looking after game, they observed a man on the way,

driving a fine fat sheep before him. The Apprentice laid a bet with his master that he would steal the sheep from the man on the way. So, the Apprentice ran some distance on the road, and dropped one of his shoes on the way. The man came up to the place and saw the shoe, and said, "Here is a good shoe; but it is of no use to me without its morrow." So he passed along. But, after travelling a small distance on a winding road, he came up to the other shoe that the Apprentice had dropped; and he saw the shoe and said, "Here is the morrow." So he tied the fine fat sheep to a post, and he returned himself for the other shoe. And the Apprentice lost no time; but loosed the sheep and took it away to his master.

The next day, the same man was coming the same way with another fine fat sheep; and the Apprentice took it in hand to steal it also. So, when the man had come to the place where he had tied the sheep the last day, the Apprentice went into the wood, bleating like a sheep. "Oh!" says the man, "this is my sheep, which broke away yesterday." So he tied the sheep, even as

he did unto the other ; and the Apprentice jumped out, and stole away the sheep. And in this way the man lost his two sheep.

At another time the Apprentice laid a bet with his master that he would steal a fine horse belonging to a gentleman who took great care of him and locked him safely in the stable every night and kept the key of the stable-door in a secret place lest any one should go by craft and take away his horse while he slept. The master thought that, as the gentleman took so much pains, the Apprentice would not be able to succeed ; but the Apprentice laid a bet that he would do it, and gain the gentleman's horse for his master.

They waited till Hallow-e'en, and then went to the gentleman's house ; and, taking care that they were not seen, climbed up into the *farradh*, or loft, over the kitchen, where the hen-roost was, and where was a store of good peats to make light at night when the people wanted oil to give them light, and where all kinds of articles were put to be out of the way. Into this loft the Master and his Apprentice quietly crept, and they watched

diligently to see if they would find out where the key of the stable-door was placed. Down below in the kitchen, the people were busy with their Hallowe'en sports, burning and cracking nuts, dropping eggs, and performing other rites and ceremonies that were in fashion on that night, expecting that in their dreams they would have a knowledge of futurity, and, more particularly, that the young would gain a view of their future companions and helpmates.

On the loft the Apprentice was not idle. Here he sewed to his master's coat-tail an old dry hide that was in the loft, without letting his Master know what he had done ; and then whispered him that he was going to crack a nut, on account of its being Hallowe'en. The Master told him to do nothing of the kind, or they would be discovered. But the Apprentice cracked the nut, and the noise of it was heard by the people in the kitchen below, who looked up, afraid that the house was going to fall ; but, seeing all safe, went on again with their amusements.

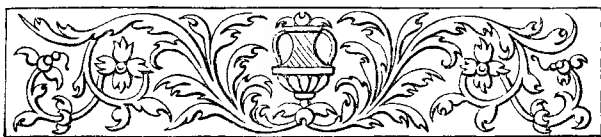
The Apprentice again whispered his Master, that he would not let Hallowe'en pass without

keeping it a little ; and that he was going to crack another nut. The Master said he was a stupid fellow ; and that the people down below would be sure to hear the noise, and would examine the loft and discover them. But this did not prevent the Apprentice : he cracked a nut, and the people started. " Oh ! " says one of them ; " I'll bet it's the *Gadaidhe Dubh*." So they got a ladder and a light in order to search the loft. The Master found that it was time for him to take to his heels ; so, he leaped down from the loft, dragging with him the dry hide, which made a rustling noise after him. At first, the people were alarmed, supposing him to be an evil spirit ; but, presently, they all ran out after him, and gave him chase.

The Apprentice remained in the loft, until everyone had gone in chase of his Master except the old lady of the house. Then he came down, and he asked her for the key of the stable-door, until he would catch the thief. The old lady gave him the key, not knowing, in the hurry, who it was to whom she gave it. Whereupon the Apprentice went to the stable, unlocked the door,

and took out the gentleman's fine horse, upon which he galloped off, and so won his wager ; feeling sure that his Master would make way for himself and get safe home ; which, indeed, proved to be the case.





HOW COINEACH AND GILBERT
BEHAVED THEMSELVES
IN FRANCE.



IT was in the olden days, that there lived in Cantire a weaver named Gilbert, who had an apprentice called Coineach.

Said Gilbert one day to Coineach, "We are working very hard, and the people are very bad in their payments, and my family is large, and we are all half starved; what will we do?"

Coineach replied, "This will we do. Keep all the *weabs* until you get payment, and if they

come not with their money, we will sell the *weabs*."

So they wrought both of them very hard until they had a great many *weabs*. And when the people did not come with their money, then they went a long distance off with the *weabs*, and sold them; and they all got, each of them, a fine suit of clothes; and they went away to France, and they set up in grand style in one of the Inns of Paris.

The Town Crier went about, offering a great reward to any person who would go and guard a bridge that was in building, of which some depredators threw down at night all that was built in the day. Coineach went out and said to the Town Crier that his master would guard the bridge and kill the depredators. Then Coineach told his master that they would have to go to the bridge. "Oh!" says Gilbert, "I wish I were at home with my poor wife and children. We will all get ourselves killed."

Coineach says, "Be not afraid! come with me, and I will give you all the honour of our success."

So away they went, and crept into a hole near the bridge, watching what they would see. After a while of the night they saw two great men, like giants, coming and throwing down the bridge. Gilbert was trembling. Coineach took up a heavy stone and struck one of the giants. The giant thought that it was his companion who had struck him, and he got angry. Coineach was an excellent marksman with a stone; and he said to his master, "I will throw another stone." So he struck the same one again. The giant did not see from whence the stone had come, Coineach and Gilbert being concealed, so he again accused his companion of striking him. Thereupon a strong dispute arose between the two giants, until they fought, and both fell upon the bridge.

Coineach watched his opportunity, and when they were down he sprang from his hole, and went up to the giants, and cut off both their heads. Then Coineach and Gilbert carried the heads into the town of Paris, and the town council gave them a great sum of money; and the two Highlanders passed for great and wonderful men.

There was yet another thing that befel Coineach and Gilbert.

It was after the matter of the bridge and the giants, and Coineach and Gilbert were living in grand style at one of the Inns of Paris, when the Town Crier went round the second time, making a proclamation that any one should have the King's daughter who would slay a wild boar that lived in a wood, and killed all the people who came that way. Coineach came and said to the Town Crier that his master would go and destroy the beast. Then Coineach told his master that he must go forth to the wild boar. Gilbert trembled. "Oh! what will I do?" he says; "I shall get myself killed. And what do I want with the King's daughter, when I have got me a wife already?"

Coineach bade him to remember the bridge and the giants; and Coineach said to his master, "Be not afraid! I will do the work for you, and you shall share the honour."

So Coineach and Gilbert went forth to the wood, and a great company followed them in order to see how they carried on; but the company

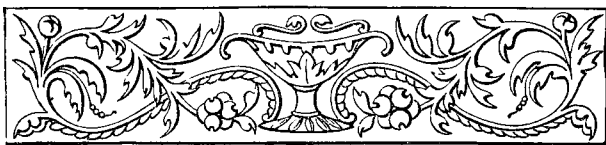
remained at a distance. Coineach and Gilbert advanced to the wood, and the wild boar observing them, came forth to destroy them. Gilbert trembled, and climbed up a tree. The wild boar perceived him, and began to root up the tree. If Gilbert trembled before, he now trembled twice; and Coineach did not step forth to assist him. The company were all observing at a distance.

Presently the wild boar succeeded, and the tree fell, and with it Gilbert. Gilbert trembled. But the tree fell, and as it fell Gilbert fell on to the wild boar's back, and sat astride it. Then Coineach stepped forth, and Coineach cried aloud to the company, "My master doth not think it worth his while to kill the beast, but he will ride it." Then Coineach drew nigh to his master, and killed the wild boar. The company rejoiced.

Now Gilbert had no relish for the King's daughter, and it so fell out that she had a relish for Coineach. So the King, her father, arranged it that Gilbert should get himself back to Cantire, with his wife and children, and plenty of riches, and that Coineach should be left in France with

the King's daughter. And these things came to pass in order. Coineach took him to wife the King's daughter, and Gilbert went back to Cantire, where he had no more need to toil at his loom, for he had plenty to support him all his days.





THE SHAVING SPECTRE.



HERE was a certain Carrier who conveyed goods from one place to another up and down through Cantire; and being honest, thrifty, and industrious, he made a good living with his horse and cart, and was enabled to lay by a sum of money against his old age, or for his son after him.

But the Carrier did not live long enough to enjoy the money himself; so his son inherited it; and he found it to be a sum sufficient for him to stock a farm. So he took one on lease, and got himself married to a respectable girl, with whom he expected to be happy. But fortune seemed to frown upon them. Their cattle died of disease, and their crops were spoilt: ruin stared them in the face. They struggled on for a while, but were

not able to make head against their troubles ; so that at last they were compelled to sell everything that remained to them by public roup.* When this was done, and their rent and debts had been paid with the proceeds, they found that they had not one shilling that they could call their own. Then they sat themselves down together very sadly, consulting what they might do in order to provide themselves with food and raiment.

Said the wife, “What do you think of taking up your father’s trade as a carrier?”

Said the husband, “If I had the money to purchase a horse and cart, I would try my father’s trade.”

She said, “I will go among my own friends, and try to gather the money.”

So she went to her friends, and she gathered the money ; and her husband purchased a strong horse and a good cart, and he published that he was prepared to go in the same track where his father used to go : and he expected that the public would employ him.

The Carrier got his cart loaded and went

* *Anglice*, auction.

on his journey. And at the end of the first day he came to an Inn, in which his father had been accustomed to spend a night with comfort ; but he found that the old landlord, who had been his father's friend, was dead, and that his son kept the Inn. So it was of him that the Carrier asked for a night's lodging.

Then the landlord answered him rudely, and said, " You can put your horse in the stable, and you can lie by his side, if you please ; for I cannot give you a lodging in the Inn. There is, indeed, a little back room, which is seldom occupied ; but you would not have the courage to sleep there."

" Why not?" asked the Carrier.

" Why, because it is haunted," laughed the Landlord, " and you don't look like a man who could sleep with a ghost."

" You show me the room," said the Carrier, stoutly, " and leave the ghost to me. I warrant I'll sleep soundly ; and, if anything human should disturb me, it will be the worse for them." And the Carrier shook his oaken staff ; for he fancied that the Landlord might perhaps wish to play him a trick.

So when he had supped up his horse and himself, he went off to his room. And he thought—"if there is any Ghost in the matter, he will come at midnight; so I will keep awake till he shows himself." Now the Carrier was a pious man; and he always carried a Bible with him, and was accustomed to read from it every night before he went to bed. But on this particular night he studied it more than usual; and sat up reading it, by the light of his candle, until the clock struck twelve.

When the sound of the twelfth stroke died away the Carrier fancied he heard a light step on the floor; and, looking up from his book, he saw a diminutive form standing at his feet. It had the appearance of a little withered man, dressed in an old-fashioned waistcoat and knee-breeches, which were partly concealed by a short apron tied about his waist. He was in his shirt sleeves, and carried a small brass bason, in which the Carrier saw a shaving-brush plunged in soap-suds. The little figure had a clean towel over his arm, and two razors in a pocket of his apron. The Carrier had often heard of spectres, and had a vague idea that they were composed of skeletons and sheets, with

a flavour of brimstone and blue fire, and that they were altogether terrific in their nature and caused the flesh of the gazer to creep with awe. But, as he neither experienced this sensation, nor observed anything alarming about the queer little gentleman who stood before him with his shaving implements, he could not for a moment accept him as a genuine spectre, and he, therefore, was not at all alarmed, although astonished at his appearance.

The little gentleman came up close to the Carrier's knees, and, in a very mild and polite tone, said, "Do you want a shave?"

The Carrier reflectively passed his hand over his chin. It was very bristly; for he had not shaved himself since the last Sabbath morn. So he said, "Well, now you mention it, I think I should be the better for a shave."

"Have you any objection to being shaved by me?" said the little gentleman.

"Not in the least—if you can manage it," replied the Carrier, as he thought of their difference of size, and of the poor light of his solitary candle.

"You leave that to me," said the little gentleman,—but not at all sharply; and, in another

second, he was standing upon the Carrier's lap, had tucked his towel neatly round the Carrier's throat, and was soaping over the Carrier's chin. But not one word did he speak; and, being in this respect so unlike to other barbers, the Carrier began to think that the little gentleman was really something unearthly. However, he did not wince, or shut his eyes, or draw back his chin; not even when the little gentleman took out a glistening razor and flourished it before the Carrier's throat. The dim and flickering light did not appear to impede his work; and his ghostly razor worked dexterously and surely, without inflicting the ghost of a scratch.

In a minute or two the operation was over. The little gentleman shut up his razor, put it in the pocket of his apron with a business-like air, took the towel from the Carrier's neck, and carefully wiped the lower part of the Carrier's face. As he did this, the Carrier momentarily closed his eyes. But, when he opened them as the last particle of soap-sud was carefully wiped from his cheek, to his great surprise, the little gentleman had vanished, and had taken his shaving-bason with him.



THE SHAVING SPECTRE.

Mightily astonished at so sudden a disappearance, the Carrier took the candle and searched in all corners of the room without so much as finding a trace of the diminutive barber. So unusual and remarkable an occurrence somewhat disturbed the honest man's mind ; and he sat down on the side of his bed, turning and twisting the matter about, and endeavouring to arrive at some conclusion as to its meaning. But he found that the task was too hard for him ; so, with a sigh, he determined to think no more of it until the morning. He had just begun to take off his clothes, intending to go to bed, when, on a sudden, he saw the little gentleman of whom he had been thinking, standing before him with his apron and razors and bason of soap-suds.

“Do you want a shave ?” said the little gentleman to the Carrier, just as though he had never before put the question to him, or had so lately operated upon his chin.

“Yes, I do,” replied the Carrier, after a moment's hesitation ; for he deemed it his best policy to fall in with the suggestions of his visitor. The little gentleman motioned him to take a seat,

lathered his chin, as though it was still bristly and bearded, and then shaved him as neatly and expeditiously and silently as he had done on the previous occasion. The Carrier was determined to keep his eyes open this time ; but the little gentleman was too sharp for him ; for, in wiping the soap-suds from his face, he whisked the towel across his eyes, so that when the Carrier could use them again, he found that his little barber had vanished in the same mysterious way as before. The honest man was completely puzzled, and debated in his mind whether or no he should call the landlord and ask for an explanation of his mysterious visitant ; but at length he decided to wait until the morning, feeling sure that the landlord would laugh at him for being afraid to sleep in a room that was haunted. “I passed my word to him that I was not the man to be frightened at a ghost ; and I’ll show him that I’m as good as my word,” thought the Carrier. And he began to make himself ready for bed.

He had just turned himself about, when there upon the floor again stood the little gentleman, with his apron and razors and bason, saying, in

just the same tone and manner that he had already twice put the question to him, "Do you want a shave?"

There was something so persistent in the little gentleman's triple appearance and question, that the Carrier began to be afraid that this sort of thing would go on all through the night, and that he should have to pass the hours from then till cock-crow in submitting his cleanly-mown face to the fresh semblance of a shave. So, with his usual good temper somewhat ruffled, he made answer to the little gentleman, and said, "Thou hast shaved me twice already, and I have no further need of shaving at present. What kind of creature art thou, who disturbest me thus at such an hour? I wish to know what you are, and what brings you to me."

"What I want is that you would speak to me," answered the Spectre; "many times have I appeared to others in this room, and have conducted myself to them in the same way that I have conducted myself to you, but not one of them would put sufficient confidence in me to allow me to shave them, and not one of them

had the courage to speak to me. They would only roar and put their heads under the clothes, or rush from the room. You alone of all who have occupied this chamber have been bold enough to let me ply my razor on your face, and you shall not repent it. Yet I could have done nothing more unless you had spoken to me as you have now done, and I began to fear that my visits to you would be as fruitless as they had been to others, and that I should still be condemned to haunt this chamber without having the opportunity to disclose my secret and tell my tale of blood."

"A tale of blood! a secret! oh, what is it?" cried the Carrier.

"You are a bold man, and a religious one, too," said the Spectre; "for I see the good Book on the table, and I saw you reading it with attention. Swear to me, upon that Book, that if I tell you my tale, and disclose to you my secret, you will not rest until you have brought retribution upon the guilty ones."

"I swear it!" said the Carrier, solemnly.

"'Tis well!" said the Spectre; "you shall now know who I am and what I want to be done;

and be not afraid, for I shall cause you no injury."

"I did not fear thee at the first, and I will not dread thee at the last," said the Carrier. "If I can help you to punish the guilty doers, I will. I can't say more than that; good deeds are better than fair words; only try me, and you will see."

"I am satisfied that you mean well," replied the Spectre; "and I will confide my secret to you. Although I come to you in this shape and with these instruments of the barber's trade, yet I am the spirit of him who, a few years since, was the landlord of this Inn. He was your father's friend, and many a time has made him welcome here."

"Yes, he was always glad to see him," said the Carrier. "My poor father!"

"I had one only child," continued the Spectre; "a son—the same who now keeps this Inn, and who behaved so rudely to you last night. Alas! he ever behaved rudely to me, despising my counsel, and openly setting me at nought. To keep him at home, and under my own influence,

I gave him a share in the business ; but, though he did nothing and suffered me to do all the work, yet this would not suffice him, and he told me that he must have all. I had reason to think that if I complied with his request, and gave up to him the whole of the business, that he would soon make away with it, and waste the proceeds in gambling and drunkenness ; and then that I should be without the shelter of a roof in my old age. So I refused him again and again when he asked me ; and when he tried to persuade me that I was too old to attend to the business, I asked him who was to mind it if I did not ; and then he was angered and went out muttering threats that if he couldn't have the whole of the business by fair means, he would by foul. I had no suspicion that he meant so ill as to take my life ; for, though he was a bad son and had fallen among evil ways, yet he was my own flesh and blood, and I never thought that he could raise his hand against his father. But, alas ! I was deceived in this. That same evening I was going round by the byre, when I came upon my son in earnest talk with Sandie MacPhail, who used to call in each

morning to shave me. They both seemed taken aback by my presence, though I did not know any reason why they should take it amiss; but so it was, and they went their ways, after Sandie had stammered out something about making a better bargain, and said that what I had heard them bargaining about was a bit of hay that he had got to part with from his croft. I thought no more about it until I saw Sandie the next morning, when he called in to shave me as usual—for I always liked to look neat and trim, not knowing what visitors I might have during the day. And Sandie's hand trembled so, and he looked so skeered, that I laughed and said to him, 'Why, Sandie, man! you must have made a bad bargain last night, and not slept soundly upon it.' The laugh was in my mouth, when Sandie chucked my head back, and drew the razor across my throat from ear to ear."

"He cut your throat?" gasped the Carrier.

"From ear to ear," replied the Spectre, calmly, as he held up his chin, and, with a flourish of his fingers, traced the razor's course upon his neck. "He cut my throat so thoroughly, that,

before I had time to utter a cry, I fell down dead. Here is the razor with which he did the deed." And he held out for the Carrier's inspection the second razor that he carried in the pocket of the short apron that was tied about his waist.

The Carrier took the razor and perceived that it was covered with blood-stains, which had now rusted over, and that there was a deep nick on the sharp edge of the instrument.

"That was where the razor came against the bone," explained the Spectre, politely. "Sandie did his work thoroughly. You will see his name upon the handle."

It was even so; for, although the haft was discoloured, yet, when the Carrier held it near to the lighted candle, he could plainly perceive, scratched upon its black side, the words, "Sandie MacPhail." "This is not bad evidence against the villain," said the Carrier.

"No; nor this either," said the Spectre, as he produced a towel which had been saturated with blood. "If you will look in the corner you will find a further witness."

The Carrier took up the discoloured towel, and, turning it about, saw that it was marked in one corner, "S. McP., 5."

"What do you think of that?" asked the Spectre.

"It looks more and more like evidence," replied the Carrier. "May I ask what the villain did with this razor and towel? he surely would not leave them with the corpse—with you."

"He did, though," said the Spectre; "for he was so overcome by fear, that he had no sooner done the deed and seen me fall from my chair than he rushed from the room. But my unfortunate son was waiting at the door—waiting to step into his murdered father's shoes—and he came in at once, and made away with all traces of the murder, and buried the razor and the towel under this very brick on which I am standing. If you will raise it up, I will put them in again."

The Carrier did as he was told, and the two witnesses of the crime were hidden from view. "And what was done with the poor old gentle-

man's body — I mean, with you?" asked the Carrier.

"My son dug a hole in which he buried the body, just as it was, underneath that very flag-stone on which you are now standing," said the Spectre.

The Carrier moved uneasily from off the stone, and took up his station at a yard's distance. "And is it there now?" he asked.

"It is there now," replied the Spectre; "and it will be your duty to disclose it at the proper time. My son accounted for my disappearance by telling the neighbours that I had gone away to Campbelton, and from thence to Glasgow, to dispose of some whiskey that I had for sale. And then, pretending to receive a letter from Glasgow telling him that I was sick and like to die, and must see him at once, he directly set off to Glasgow, and there had a month of revelling, and came back and told the neighbours that he had seen the last of his poor old father, and had given him a decent burial. So, very soon I was forgotten, and my wicked son stood in my place. And now that I have told to you

my tale of blood and disclosed my secret, I expect you not to shrink from your part of the bargain."

"I will keep my Bible-oath," said the Carrier, as he laid his hand upon the Book. "What do you require of me?"

"To bring my murderers to justice," said the Spectre. "You must not rest till my wicked son and his companion are taken before the Judge for their crime. To do this will be a loss to you in your time and work, and I know that you are a poor man."

"I could scarcely be poorer!" groaned the Carrier.

"But in the end it shall be a gain to you," said the Spectre.

"I don't care for the gain," said the Carrier, stoutly; "if I can only give your spirit rest, and bring those two villains to justice, I shall be content. My pleasure and reward will be to see them dancing upon nothing to the music of the prison bell."*

* *i. e.* being hanged.

“Well said!” exclaimed the Spectre; “but, as I do not wish you to work for nothing, or to be a loser through me, I will at once reward you in a more substantial way. You may imagine from what I have already told you that I could not put much confidence in my son, and on that very last day that we were together, when he threatened me that if he could not have the whole of the business by fair means he would do so by foul, it occurred to me that he might possibly break open my strong box and rob me of the goodly sum of money that I had been enabled to lay by during many years of industry and prudence. So I thought that, until I was able to deposit the money in some safe bank, I would bury it in a secret place, where it should be out of my son’s reach, and from whence I could remove it at some future time. I did so; I took the money from the strong box, and I buried it here.” The Spectre pointed to a stone underneath the bed. “The next morning I was murdered; and when my son came to open my strong box he found it empty, and discovered that his crime had been committed for no purpose. That money

shall now be yours; take it, and employ it usefully."

The Carrier thanked the Spectre; and when he had raised the stone, he found underneath it a stout leathern bag filled with gold and silver, which he clapped in his own pouch with great glee.

"Do not forget the stones underneath which lie the razor, the towel, and the corpse," said the Spectre. "In the morning go to the authorities, and tell them that you slept in this room, and that you had a certain dream, in which I appeared unto you. Inform them that you can point out the murderers, and can show the spots wherein the murdered person and the instruments of crime are concealed. Do this, and I will never more trouble you with my presence; but if you fail to do this and bring those two men to justice, I will haunt you till the day of your death. Farewell!" And the Spectre vanished.

The Carrier rubbed his eyes; but it was no dream. If he had needed any evidence of the reality of the transaction that had just taken place, he had it in the most pleasing and substantial

form in the heavy money bag that was safe in his pouch. He resolved to fulfil to the letter the instructions that he had received from the Shaving Spectre, and was anxious for the morning to dawn in order that he might carry out his plans without delay. He felt too much excited by what he had seen and heard to compose himself to sleep, and did not feel altogether comfortable at being shut up in a room which had been the scene of so dreadful a crime, and wherein its ghastly witnesses were laid. After some moments of consideration, he determined to quietly leave the room, and seek the stable. "That villainous landlord," he thought, "told me that I might lie by the side of my horse, and I will take him at his word, though he little guesses why."

He left the back room, after once more carefully noting the position of the stones that had been pointed out to him by the Spectre, and made his way towards the door that opened into the stable-yard. As he did so, he heard the sounds of revelry proceeding from a front room; and, on listening at its door, he discovered that the landlord

and four or five of his friends were playing at cards. Peeping through the key-hole he could distinctly see them seated around a table, on which were two candles, whose light fell on a glittering heap of silver money, which appeared to be the stake for which the gamblers were playing. Bottles of whiskey were also on the table, and the company appeared to have been carousing and drinking deeply.

“The Carrier does not seem to have been troubled by the Ghost!” cried one of the guests, as he set down his empty glass.

“No!” said another; “the thick-headed fellow has doubtless got a skull too stout for a ghost to crack. I dare be sworn that he would snore through the live-long night, and let a bevy of ghosts dance round his bed, without being any the wiser for the company that he had fallen into. ’Tis after one o’clock, and if he had seen the Ghost we should have heard his yells an hour ago.”

“Ah! he looked but a poor chicken-hearted fool,” said a third. And the landlord laughed, and appeared to think it an excellent joke.

"Listeners never hear any good of themselves," thought the Carrier.

"Let us double the stakes, gentlemen!" cried the Landlord; "it is not a faint heart that will win this fair lady!" and he threw the Queen of Hearts upon the table.

"Agreed!" cried the others; and more silver pieces were added to the glittering pile on the table.

"These gentlemen seem to be mighty brave folks," thought the Carrier; "but I think that I could scare them a little. At any rate, I will try." And he returned softly to his back room.

"They seem to know all about the Ghost," he said to himself, as he pulled a white sheet from the bed and tied it round his neck.

"No doubt the folks who have slept in this room have spread it abroad how the ghost has come with his razor and towel and bason, and has said to them, 'Do you want a shave?' I will try what these fine folks will think of it when the question is put to them. I'll answer for it they will be no braver than they have fancied me

to be." So he dressed himself up in the white sheet, and he wrapped a cloth round his head and face, and, taking his razor in one hand and a bason and towel in the other, he went very quietly to the room wherein the play was going on. They had fallen to bad words with each other, and were making so great a disturbance that the Carrier was enabled to open the door and stride across the room without being heard or seen. Then, as he stood at the upper end of the table, he suddenly smote his fist upon the board, in order to attract their attention, and when their faces were turned towards him, with blank amazement and horror depicted upon every feature, and when their voices were suddenly hushed with tongue-tied fright, the Carrier stretched out his bason with one hand and his razor with the other, and, in the hollowest and most sepulchral tones that he could assume, uttered the magical words, "Do you want a shave?"

The effect was electrical. The guilty landlord was the first to find his voice: and, shrieking out "The Ghost! the Ghost!" he rushed from the room, followed helter-skelter by his com-

panions, too hurried and alarmed even to pick up the money from the table.

“I may as well pocket it for them ;” said the Carrier, when he found that he had the room to himself. “I can turn it to honest account, if they can’t. This is a night of goodluck : with this and the money-bag in my pouch I am a made man. Perhaps I had better blow out the candles, and get back to my own room, before they have time to pluck up courage and return.” He did so, and reached his room without encountering a soul ; but, being afraid to carry out his intention of passing the remainder of the night by the side of his horse in the stable, he determined to make the best of it where he was ; and although he had resolved to keep wide awake till morning, yet, in another half-hour, was buried in a deep and dreamless sleep.

The Carrier slept so long and soundly that the sun was mounting high in the heavens when he awoke. His first thoughts were on the adventure of the past night, and he forthwith sought for his two heaps of money, to ascertain whether or no they were spectral pieces of silver. But there wa

no illusion about them ; they were genuine coins of the realm, and in a sufficient number to make the Carrier dream of becoming a laird. He packed them safely about him, and then prepared himself to fulfil the wishes of the Shaving Spectre.

As he was coming from the stable, he met the landlord, who appeared but ill-at-ease and out of sorts ; but who, nevertheless, tried to put on a cheery manner, as he said, “ Well, my friend, did you see the Ghost last night ? ”

“ Did *you* ? ” replied the Carrier, with all the emphasis that he was capable of. “ You look as though you had been up all night and had not washed yourself this morning. Do you want a shave ? if so, I will try and help you to one.” And, as he walked away, his laugh had a more genuine ring in it than that of the landlord, who cursed the Carrier for an impudent scoundrel.

But his words were lost upon the Carrier ; or, if they reached his ears, they had no effect upon him ; least of all would they have caused him to swerve from his present purpose. For he was on his road to the chief magistrate of the burgh, to whom he told as much as was necessary of

his night's adventure ; and he did this with such earnestness, that the magistrate (who was a strong believer in second-sight) fully believed his tale, and promised to lose not a moment in taking the proper steps for the search of the body and the detention of the suspected persons.

And the magistrate was as good as his word. When search was made in the spot indicated by the Spectre, the body of the old Innkeeper was discovered in its shallow grave ; and there were abundant signs that he had been foully murdered with the aid of the razor, which, with the bloody towel, was also found under the stone pointed out by the Carrier. The old landlord's wicked son and his accomplice were arrested, tried, and condemned ; and, although they had at first denied all knowledge of the crime, yet, before their execution, they confessed the deed, and the justice of their doom.

And the Carrier returned home to his wife with an abundance of money that enabled them to pass the rest of their days in comfort, and with a grateful memory of the Shaving Spectre.



THE GHOST OF THE DEVIL'S GLEN.



ABOUT the beginning of the present century, a sea-captain of the name of Kennedy, who was a native of Glenlussa, and a very powerful man both in strength and stature, went on business to Tarbert; and, leaving that place for Campbelton in the afternoon, proceeded along the west coast of Cantire, riding on a fine grey mare. It was in the winter; and he had not ridden very far when the night came on; but there was a moon, and it gave him ample light to distinguish the highway and the nearer objects.

When he reached Bealachintie the people had retired to their beds; and all would have been as quiet as the grave, were it not for the hoarse sound of the great waves as they dashed over the rocks in

the bay, and the occasional screech of the heron, as, alarmed by the clatter of his mare's hoofs, it rose from the peat-swamps and moss-hags, and winged its flight far into the darkened distance. The fine new road along the sea-shore was not made at that time ; and Captain Kennedy had to urge his tired steed up the old steep road that then rose on the brae-face above Bealachintie. He pursued his course along the high ground until he came to *Alt-na-dubhneach*, or "The Glen of the Black One, or Devil." The stream in this Devil's Glen was spanned by two bridges—one, an old one, that was very high and narrow ; and the other, a newer one, which was not far distant from the first. Both the bridges are still standing ; but the road has fallen into disuse, and is seldom taken by travellers.

It so happened that Captain Kennedy took the old bridge ; but, when he put his mare upon it, she refused to go forward. As the moonlight enabled him to see that there was no obstruction in his path, he urged his mare to proceed ; but, although he plied her with whip and spur, yet he could not prevail upon her to advance a step.

Each time that he put her at the narrow bridge she swerved round in such a way that, more than once, he was nearly unseated and precipitated into the stream, that, swollen by the wintry rains, was rushing fiercely down the steep hill-side to the sea. The other bridge was close at hand, but the Captain's anger was now aroused, and he was determined that, come what would, he would force his mare across the Devil's Glen by the old bridge. Like Balaam, he beat her again and again; but, unlike the ass, the poor animal had not the gift of speech. If she had possessed it she could have told her master what it was that stayed her progress. Indeed, Kennedy himself (as he afterwards said) felt some unseen power striving to throw both beast and rider over the bridge into the deep glen, and he scarcely knew what course to steer. But, suddenly, it came to his memory that he had once heard a traditional story to the effect, that, if a female animal perceived a supernatural object and refused to go forward, she could be made to do so if a person tied his neckcloth about her neck. He had laughed at this story when he had first heard it, but he now thought that there

might be some truth in it. At any rate, he resolved to give it a trial, and see what would come of the experiment.

His mare was trembling in every limb, snorting with fear, and bathed in sweat. He took off his neckcloth, twisted it around her neck, and then, with his riding-whip, gave her a heavy lash over the flank. With a mighty bound, and a loud snort of mingled pain and dread, the mare dashed over the bridge; but, as she did so, her cry was echoed by a loud yell from her rider, who, at the very moment when he was on the centre of the bridge, received a violent blow across his thigh. Yet, nothing of an opposing nature could he see, nor were there any trees or boughs near the bridge. The moon shone clear and bright, and he could view the landscape for some distance on every side; but all around the Devil's Glen was bare and motionless, and no living or ghostly form met his searching gaze. Though a brave man, who disbelieved in apparitions, and had seen strange sights in foreign lands and on the wide ocean, yet the Captain did not feel altogether free from alarm, as he galloped on to Campbellton,

and left the Devil's Glen far behind him. When he drew rein at his own door, his thigh was still smarting from the effects of the blow that he had so mysteriously received ; and his mare was in such a jaded condition that she was useless for some time after, and, indeed, may be said to have never recovered from the effects of that night's ride.

The next morning the Captain came to my father's house, and told him the events that had befallen him at the Devil's Glen ; and, not only so, but showed to my father the mark upon his thigh. It was not a long *wheel* as from the stripe of a whip or stick, but it was a round mark, about three inches in diameter, of a livid red colour. Whether or no the Captain ever lost the mark I am unable to say ; but that he had it I myself could testify, for I saw it, being in the room when he displayed it to my father. I was a boy at the time, and the circumstance made a great impression on me. I might, perhaps, have been disposed to set down the circumstance to some drunken feat, but I felt that I could not disbelieve the Captain's story, especially when it

was verified (at least, to my mind) by such testimony.

The Captain had no sooner left the house than I summoned up courage to go to the Devil's Glen, and examined the spot; but, although it was broad daylight, it was with no little trepidation that I stepped on to the old bridge. There, indeed, were the marks of horse-hoofs, as though some steed had been plunging and gibbing in the way that the Captain had described; and there was ample evidence, in the way that the stones and turf were kicked about, that some rider had there had a battle with a refractory steed. Considerably impressed by the solemnity of the spot, even when I viewed it bathed in brilliant sunshine, and conjuring up before my youthful imagination all the warlocks, bogles, ghosts, goblins, and apparitions that could by any possibility be conceived to be the denizens of a Devil's Glen, I was about to retrace my steps homewards, when I perceived something lying in the shadow of the low parapet of the bridge. It was a round fluffly object, and, on picking it up, I discovered it to be a dead owl, and a very fine specimen. Being fond of objects of natural

history, I took it home with me, and my father was kind enough to allow it to be stuffed.

One day, when the Captain came to our house, I showed him my owl, of which I was not a little proud, and, without attaching the slightest connection between it and his adventure, told him where and when I had discovered it. I remembered afterwards that the Captain seemed very disturbed at what I said, and, with far greater earnestness than (so far as I could see) the occasion required, begged me, as I valued his friendship, never to tell any one where and when I had secured my specimen. Of course, I gave him the required promise, for, so long as I possessed my owl, that was all that I cared for. But, I had more than once occasion to notice, that when the Captain told his story of the Devil's Glen—which he was exceedingly fond of doing—he used to eye me in a peculiarly suspicious way, and, if he fancied I was about to open my lips, would himself say something so as to forestall me.

The Captain has been laid in his grave many a long year since, so that, if my promise to him ever held good, I may now consider myself free

from its obligations. As a boy I fully believed in every item of his story, more especially those portions that related to the ghostly blow, and to his grey mare seeing some ghostly object; but, since then, it has occurred to my mind that my owl may possibly have played the part of the ghost, and that the supernatural portion of the transaction may be explained in a very simple way.

Suppose, for example, that Mr. Owl was abroad on one of his nightly foraging expeditions, and was watching a mouse-hole close beside the old bridge, or, perhaps, eating his supper there. The clatter of the advancing hoofs would compel him to scuttle away; but, before he could effectually do so, the mare might be almost upon him. He would pull himself up against the parapet of the bridge, in the deep shadow cast by the moon; but the glare of his great round eyes might have been perceived by the sensitive mare, although they escaped the observation of the rider, who, I dare say, if the truth were known, was—as he himself would have said in his sea lingo—“three sheets in the wind” with drink. No doubt, the poor owl would be as frightened as was the mare, and would be

hissing and spitting like anything ; and I have often wondered that the Captain said nothing about mysterious sounds, but I dare say he made such a noise with his swearing at the mare that the bird's cry would not be heard. I then imagine that the heavy blow of his whip impelled his mare across the bridge, and that, at the same moment, the frightened owl rose to fly, and dashing his beaked head against the Captain's leg, fell dead with a broken neck, and lay there till I picked him up the next day. I still possess his stuffed form, and I call him "The Ghost of the Devil's Glen."

* * * * *

[Although my friend thus contrived to explain away the mysterious portion of the Captain's story, yet it would seem that Captain Kennedy's oft-repeated narrative was fully credited by the majority of his hearers ; and, more than this, that it was capped by another story. For I was told that, some little time after Captain Kennedy's adventure, the Rev. Mr. Stewart, the minister of the parish, was going home from Campbelton at night, and had reached the Devil's Glen, when he was attacked by something supernatural, which so

maltreated him that he was left unfit for his duty ever after, even unto the day of his death. And this remarkable adventure was (I was assured) widely talked about and fully credited. I was also told that there were many other marvellous stories about the Devil's Glen; but I was unable to lay hold of them.

The hills around the Glen rise to the height of eight hundred feet above the sea, and on their eastern side slope into Straduigh Glen, or *Gleann Strath Duthaich*, "The Country Glen." This Glen runs from north to south, and then makes a sudden bend through the hills from west to east, the latter part of the Glen bearing the name of Glenlussa. A fine river, fed by many mountain streams, and well stocked with salmon, flows through the two glens, and falls into the sea at Ardnacross, on the east coast. Only six families at present inhabit Straduigh Glen, but formerly it was well populated. Indeed, it is only within these fifty or seventy years that emigration and sheep farming have combined to depopulate many a village in the Western Highlands; so that, to quote the chieftain's saying, "If the recruiting

sergeant came there to look for soldiers, he must recruit with the colley dog, for they had nothing but sheep upon their hills."

But, in the last quarter of the past century, when Glenlussa and Straduigh Glen could boast of so numerous a population that they could, out of their own narrow boundaries, raise a fine company of volunteers to fight for George III, there were some peculiar characters to be found among them; and of one of these I was told the following stories.]





THE CHARMER OF THE COUNTRY GLEN



NE of the best known dwellers in *Gleann Strath Duthaich*, "The Country Glen," was Duncan MacGeachie. He was believed to possess arts by which he could put to defiance all fiends, fairies, witches, and warlocks ; so that, when anybody or anything was bewitched, whether it was a cow, or a horse, or a pail of milk, or man, woman, or child, Duncan was the person to consult ; for, either by charms, herbs, legendary words, threads, signs, or symbols, he would drive away the evil. Everyone looked up to him as to a wise man, and the charmer of the district.

But, though he possessed this power, yet it

was burdened with certain conditions, and he was forced to take great precautions in making use of his charms. Whenever he made up one of his prescriptions—which he did partly with words and partly with materials—he was compelled to name every member of his own family, and if he omitted to do so the evil that he removed from the charmed person would be transferred to that child or relative whose name he had neglected to mention. Of course, this made Duncan MacGeachie very careful; and, for many years, he practised his charms with great success, and with no hurt to his kith and kin.

But one day a neighbour came to him very suddenly, interrupting him just as he was sitting down to his dinner, and begging him to take the charm from off her baby of a year old. Duncan saw that it was nothing more than convulsions over teething; and, having a tub and a kettle of hot water at hand, he put the child into a warm bath without more ado, and then threw into the water some of his herbs, and repeated some of his legendary words. Very shortly the child came to itself, and Duncan received his fee for taking the

charm from off it, and then sat down to his interrupted dinner with an extra appetite. When repeating his legendary words he had, according to his custom, mentioned the names of the members of his family; but he had been in so great a hurry, and the child was so convulsed, and the mother was so pressing, that he had quite forgotten to name one of his sons, who was at some distance down the valley engaged in farm work.

This son was a tall, able, grown-up man, who had never known a day's illness. He did not come home that night, nor could his father hear anything of him from the neighbours. Duncan was in great alarm, for he had called to mind the omission of the name when he had repeated the words of the charm. Early the next morning he set forth with a few companions to search for his son. It was at the time that the volunteering and soldiering were going on; and Duncan's friends tried to persuade him that his son had enlisted, and that it would be better for them to go to Campbellton and make enquiries. But Mac-Geachie persisted that evil had come upon his lad, and that they must search for him through

the glen. So they went on, scanning every nook and cranny and pit-fall, and fancying, more than once, that they had come upon his corpse swirling among the rocks and boulders that fretted the course of the swollen river. They also shouted the young man's name, if, haply, he might have fallen from a crag, and been wounded and unable to stir, but yet having power to answer. But no reply reached their ears, save the echoes that mocked each other from hill to hill.

They had got as far as Lecknaralach at the head of Straduigh Glen, having Beinn-an-Tuirc mountain straight before them, when they heard a strange piercing cry that made their blood run cold; for it was neither a wild scream of anguish, nor was it fiendish laughter, and yet it appeared to combine these varying emotions and sounds. As "Duncan the Charmer" was one of the company, and was believed to possess power over the supernatural, his friends plucked up courage to accompany him up the steep hill-side, and round the face of a jutting rock, from which direction the sounds proceeded. When they got up to the place they discovered, to their horror, the young man of whom

they were in search, sitting, stark naked, astride a rock, brandishing his arms, and uttering the fiercest yells and wildest cries. The father was well-nigh overpowered at the sight; but he called to his son with fond expressions. The only reply from the poor madman was a yell of derision and defiance, accompanied by a shower of heavy stones and rocky fragments, which he hurled with incredible force and dexterity whenever the father and his friends attempted to approach him. They scarcely knew what to do for the best, or how to proceed.

The alternate parleying and stone-throwing continued for some time; the naked madman maintaining his position, from which they were powerless to dislodge him. At length he seemed to change his tactics; and, with a sudden bound, leapt from the rock, and darted down the hill-side with the swiftness and sure-footedness of a mountain-sheep. They followed him as quickly as they were able; but he was soon lost from view, taking the glen in the direction of Saddell. He was seen by many, some of whom joined in pursuit, while others fled from his naked presence and his

demoniac cries. He baffled all his pursuers, and night came on and left him still untaken. His clothes were found near to Lechnaralach, torn to ribands ; but they were gathered up and brought to the father by a sympathizing friend.

Poor Duncan MacGeachie sought his home that night sadder in heart than he had ever been before, and pondering on the terrible result which his charms had brought about. He was up in the morning with the first dawn of light to renew his search. On leaving his house, the first thing that he saw, within a few yards of his threshold, was the naked body of his son, extended upon the ground, and, to all appearance, dead ; but when the father placed his hand over his son's heart, he felt there the faintest flicker of life, and taking him into his house, cared for him as he would have cared for the weakest infant. His care was rewarded to a certain extent ; for his son lived, and he was never after a raging madman : but he never recovered his senses, and lived and died an idiot. As such, as is commonly the case in the Western Highlands, he became the pet of the Country Glen, and being perfectly harmless, was

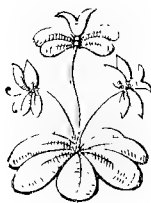
everywhere kindly welcomed, and seemed, after his own sad fashion, to live a happy life. He lived, indeed, to a good old age; and, in my boyhood, I remember to have seen him more than once, and to have been half afraid of him in consequence of his appearance, to which a streaming white beard, which he cherished with great pride, gave a great peculiarity. The MacGeachies were a long-lived family; Duncan's wife must have been quite a hundred years old when she died; and I once saw her nursing her great-great-grandson, which was six generations at one view—a more extensive prospect that I ever remember to have seen, either before or since.

After that terrible calamity to his son, Duncan MacGeachie ceased to be “Duncan the Charmer,” and gave up his legendary words, together with his herbs, threads, signs, and symbols; but his second son, John, was said to have inherited some of his father's magical skill, and to have practised his arts. It was reported of him that he could charm doors; and that he could make any door, however securely barred, to open before him, by means of his magic arts.

Another dweller in Straduigh Glen—old Donald Shaw, who, in his earlier days, had been a man-of-war's man—once told me that he had laid a bet with John MacGeachie that he could not open the door of his house. John took the bet, and went out, while Donald remained inside, and put up the heavy bar across the door, and fastened it in with his knife to keep it tight. Presently the knife worked backwards and forwards until it fell out; and then the bar began to work up and down until it tumbled to the ground; whereupon John lifted the latch and walked in, and claimed his money. Donald paid it; though he never found out John's method.

But, whether he possessed a knowledge of the black arts or no, John was an honest man, as men go, and would do no injury to his neighbours, or anyone else—unless it was a little bit of smuggling to defraud the revenue. I often used to talk to him about this, and endeavour to show him the error of his ways; but it is hard talking to persuade a West-Highlander that smuggling is the smallest of peccadilloes. John was a good reader and a very good teller of tales and legends. His memory

was most retentive; and he would repeat the whole of the history of Sir William Wallace, in rhyme, without a pause or an error from beginning to end. He gave it out with much vigour and pathos, entering into the spirit of the narrative, and becoming quite excited at the more heroic passages. With these he could kindle his audiences to enthusiasm; and when he came to that portion of the poem that described the patriot's death, he would sob with emotion, and his hearers would listen to his declamations with streaming eyes.





THE HERRING FISHER AND THE PRESS-GANG.



MY father had gone out with a herring fleet from Campbelton, and on a certain day they were all safe in harbour at the Island of Barra. They had not been there long when a man-of-war popped in upon them. Knowing the fate that was in store for them, the fishers took to their heels and made for the hills, with the press-gang after them.

Now it happened that my father had been up all night at the boat, and, when he had come ashore in the morning to the public-house, he had been glad to go to rest for awhile to sleep away his fatigue, so that when the press-gang came he had turned-in in his shirt. But his comrades gave him

the note of warning and roused him from the bed, telling him that the press-gang were on him. At this intelligence my father was so alarmed that he at once jumped up and ran out of the door; and seeing that the press-gang were just then being put on shore from the man-of-war's boat, and that not a moment was to be lost, he did not tarry by returning for his clothes, but at once set off to run to the hills in his shirt.

Being thus so slightly clad and unencumbered with superfluous apparel, and being also very strong and swift, my father soon outstripped his own companions and distanced the press-gang. After he had scudded along for some distance, and was getting tired with his running, and could not meet with any cave or secret place wherein he dared to hide himself, he lighted upon a house, and, as it was a miserable looking place, he made bold to lift the latch and enter without losing time by knocking or ceremony. He found two people inside the house, an old woman who was spinning, and a young woman who was stirring the pot over the fire. They looked scared at seeing a man with nothing but his shirt on thus entering in upon them so suddenly.

The lassie squealed, and lifting up her spoon in surprise, let the pot boil over into the fire, while the old wife nearly fell off her stool in affright.



My father was too much out of breath to waste many words in explanation, but he gasped out, "The press-gang! save me!" and they understood him at once. "Get you in here, decent man, and you shall be safe," said the old wife, as soon as she could get herself together; and she led my father to a bed in a little room which had no glass window, but only a hole in the mud wall,

into which straw had been thrust. My father crept into the bed, and hid himself there in the darkness, listening anxiously to every sound of approaching footsteps. But he had only one fright, and that was when the gude man came in from his work ; all the rest of the day he was not interfered with, and heard nothing of his pursuers. It was soon explained to the old man that he had got a new tenant in his house, and, as everyone hated the press-gang, the good man's sympathies were at once enlisted for my father, and he brought him a good supper and a glass of whiskey to keep up his courage.

They had all gone to bed, when, about midnight, my father heard the sound of hard English outside the house, and, presently, there was a great thumping at the door. My father knew at once that it was the press-gang, and cast about what he should do for his escape. The thumping and the English were going on, and the old man, crying to my father to lie close, unbarred the door. My father heard the press-gang enter, and, somewhat to his relief, instead of asking for him, they said to the old wife, "Where is your daughter?" Now

my father understood their language, but the old wife had got no English ; so when she caught the word “daughter,” she fancied they were seeking a doctor, and she therefore replied, “*Cha’ neil dotair an so*”—“There is no doctor here.” The press-gang did not understand her, and they pushed about, looking for the daughter. Her bed was just on the other side of the thin partition, against which my father had crept, and he could hear her trembling all over while the men were searching the rest of the room. They soon found her, and the poor lassie set up a great scream as they dragged her forth.

My father thought that the noise that was being made would be favourable for his escape ; so, as he could not render any help to the lassie, he pushed the straw out of the hole in the mud wall, squeezed himself with some difficulty through the narrow aperture, and took to running with the greatest speed. But before he had got many yards from the house, and before he had lost the hearing of the poor lassie’s cries, he heard a great shout, and found that he had been discovered by one of the press-gang who had, perhaps, been left outside

the house to keep watch. It was a bright moonlight night; and my father wished that his shirt had been anywhere else than on his back, for it mainly assisted to guide his enemies in their pursuit. Half-a-dozen of them were now in pursuit of him, shouting and yelling, and even firing pistols at him, though, perhaps, this was only to intimidate him. As his shirt made him to be so conspicuous in the moonlight, my father thought it would be the best plan to throw it away and run in his buff; and this he did. This proceeding probably saved him, for his pursuers made for his shirt, imagining, most likely, that he was inside it, and had fallen from exhaustion, and my father, at the same time, had doubled like a hare in another direction. Thus his pursuers were thrown off the scent; and, as good luck would have it, they took the very opposite road to that which my father took; and one of the men fell over a rock, crying, "my bones are broken."

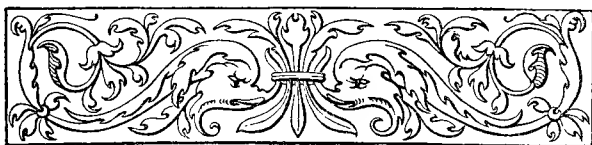
My father travelled on "until he met a haystack," where he made a place for himself; but he did not remain in it long, for he began to feel very cold. So, as all seemed safe, he crept out, and

once more took to running, until he came to a barn; and there he covered himself with straw, and remained till daylight. When the farmer came to the barn in the morning he was greatly surprised to find a naked man lying asleep amidst the straw; and crying out that it was a murder, he with his noise not only brought his men to his assistance, but also aroused my father from his heavy slumber. My father was more frightened than the farmer and his men; for, at first, he imagined that they were the press-gang; and he would have once more taken to running if he had seen any hole or door through which he could have escaped. But there was none; so he jumped out of the straw, intending to ask the farmer for protection. But when the farmer and his men saw a wild-looking, stark-naked man thus advancing upon them, with straws sticking in his hair, they viewed him in the light of an imbecile, or lunatic; and snatched up forks wherewith to defend themselves from his attacks.

Of course each side soon found out the mistake they were making, and when my father explained to them how it was that he came to be dressed in

96 *The Herring Fisher and the Press-gang.*

his buff, the farmer at once understood all about it, and gave him his coat to wrap around his loins, like a kilt, and led him to his house, which was close at hand. There he furnished my father with a full suit of the Highland garb, until he should get his own clothes; and he also set before him a good breakfast, and sent one of his men to spy out if the man-of-war was still off the Island. When it was reported to have sailed, my father knew that he was safe, and he therefore bade farewell to the friendly farmer, and went back to the boats, where he found that nearly all his companions had been captured by the press-gang and taken on board the man-of-war. The shortness of hands obliged him to do double work; and, as they left the island the next day, he was unable to search out the house in which he had first taken refuge, and to learn what had befallen the poor lassie. My father did not afterwards take a part in the herring-fishery voyages, so that he escaped any further adventures with the press-gang.



THE DROVER OF RONACHAN.



IN the little village of Ronachan, on the western coast of Cantire, there once lived a Drover, whose business it was to purchase cattle and to drive them to the markets and fairs, in order to sell them and make a profit of them ; in which trade he was sometimes successful, and at other times made little or nothing by it.

On a certain day, when he had got together a fine drove of cattle, he went with them to a fair, where he sold them for good prices, and set off for home with a cheerful heart and a pocketfull of money ; but he had not got far on his road when he met with a band of robbers, who robbed him of every farthing. This filled him with great grief,

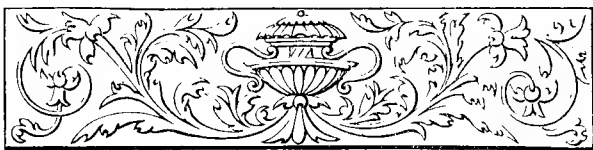
not knowing how he should face his creditors on his return; and also being a stranger in those parts, and not having any money to pay for a night's lodging. Night coming on, he spied a little house at a distance, and making for it found it to be a barn, with straw and oats in it. So he crept in among the straw, in order to spend a grievous dreary night.

About midnight he was awoke by the band of robbers coming to the barn, to eat and drink and divide their spoil. The poor Drover kept himself quite still and snug, but feared every moment that he would be discovered and murdered. After that the robbers had been drinking for some time, they began to disagree about the division of the booty. The Drover watched them through a hole in the straw, knowing that they had got his money; and he saw them spreading it out in bank-notes and gold. Then the Drover quietly reached his hands to his shoes, and got his face made black; and when all the robbers were disputing and saying, "Where is my share?" the Drover suddenly jumped out of the hole in the straw, crying, "And where is my share?"

When the robbers saw him with his blackened face, they thought it was the old fiend himself. So they ran away as fast as they could, leaving all the booty behind them. Then the Drover picked up all the money, and took a different direction, and got hid in a safe place till daylight. And when he counted the money, he found that he had made a good night's work of it, having got back his own money and a pretty large sum besides. Then he got himself back to Ronachan with comfort, and was able to pay his creditors, and had a pretty round sum to lay by for other purchases.*

* The Highland drovers usually tie a knot in the tail of one of the beasts in each drove, as a sure preventative against the evil eye.





WHAT BEFELL THREE HIGHLAND DROVERS

THROUGH LEARNING ENGLISH.



T was in one of the sequestered glens of Cantire, but in which of them it has now been forgotten, that three Highlanders lived with their families, and were very friendly to each other. It was proposed to go with some cattle to a market at a considerable distance from home. The three Drovers could only speak Gaelic ; but they were successful in disposing of their cattle. After this they proposed to spend the evening separately in amusing themselves through the fair, under the promise to meet in the evening at a lodging-house, and each of them to learn an English phrase or sentence to

carry home with them, so as to make sport for themselves and their wives after they got themselves back to Cantire.

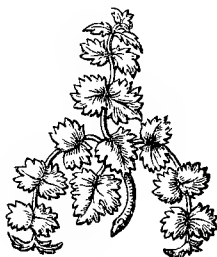
They were as good as their promise, and each got him a word of English ; and when they met in the evening, they repeated what they had learned. A had learned, "Us three Highland men." B had learned, "The money in the purse." And C had learned, "The right and good reason." They amused themselves with their English until they went to bed ; and they promised themselves some fine sport with their knowledge when they got home.

In the morning they got up pretty early, and made for Cantire. But they had not been going far when they met with a dead man by the way-side. They stood with amazement, looking at the body, when a gentleman came riding up, and seeing the three Highlanders and the dead body, he said, "Who killed this man?" They knew that he spoke English ; so they said to each other in Gaelic, "Here is a good opportunity for us to use our English." So, when the gentleman again said, "Who killed this man?" A answered him, "Us

three Highlanders." "For why did you kill the man?" said the Gentleman. "The money in the purse," said B. "And was that the reason why you robbed and murdered him?" asked the Gentleman. "The right and good reason," said C. "Oh, you horrible wretches!" cried the Gentleman; and he rode off for assistance, while the three Highlanders pursued their journey towards Cantire, feeling not a little proud that they had been able to talk with an English gentleman in his own native language.

But before they had got to the next town, they met the policemen coming to apprehend them for the murder, and they were taken off and put into prison. And when they came to be searched, the money they had received for their cattle was found upon them; and as it was thought to be too great a sum for three poor Highlanders, the Englishmen imagined it had been taken from the purse of the murdered man. So the three Highland Drovers came near to be hanged; and it would have been so if they had not got a man who could speak Gaelic and English; and he explained their case to the judge, and got them their liberty.

And when they had come home, their wives could not think what had become of them, and had feared that they must have been disposed of by robbers on the way. And the three Highlanders vowed that they would never more learn an English word for ever ; for it must be a bad language that had brought them near to hanging.





THE MURDERED PEDLAR.



PEDLAR was returning from Tarbert fair, and was taking the shortest way home over the hills and glens, when, at a lonely part of the road, he was met by a man who took a great fancy to his wares, and thought that he would secure them to himself by murdering the Pedlar. He joined-to, therefore, and soon despatched him, for the Pedlar was unwary and did not offer much resistance. The murderer then thought he would hide the dead body in the ground ; but, while he was stripping it for this purpose, there came by a young girl who lived in his immediate neighbourhood and knew him well. She also had been at Tarbert fair and was taking the short way home. When she saw

the dead body and what was being done, she would have fled, but the murderer caught hold of her and restrained her, saying that he was sorry to kill a neighbour's daughter, but that he could not avoid it, as it was likely that she would make known what she had witnessed. He then tied her feet and hands with a cord, and left her on the ground until he could inter the dead body, after which he would make away with her.

But, providentially, the young man who courted her had met her at the fair, and, for a fairing, had given her a pocket-knife. She made an effort to get at this, and, being successful, she cut the cord and escaped while the murderer was busied over the grave. When she got home she told to her mother what she had seen; but her mother advised her never to speak of it to anyone, lest the murderer should come and take away her life. The girl obeyed, and the deed was never mentioned until some few years after, when the murderer died. The Pedlar's body was then found in the spot pointed out by the girl, and some of his wares were discovered at the house of the man who had taken away his life.



A DEED OF DARKNESS AT FAOCHAG FARM.



N the south-east coast of Cantire, called "The Learside," is a farm named *Faochag*, or "Whelk," from that shell-fish being found in great abundance on the sea-shore at ebb-tide.

A Mr. MacIsaac farmed here for more than half a century, but when he grew old and his family had died off, he gave up the farming and disposed of his stock. He still, however, continued to live in his old house, as new houses about half-a-mile distant were built for the fresh tenants. The old man was eighty years of age, but made himself content to live quite alone. He was very pious, and spent most of his time in

devotional exercises and reading good books. He was hale and hearty, and could travel six miles to church on Sabbath, and walk home again. He always used to be early at church, and was thankful for the privilege of hearing the Word of God. Such was the character of this good old man that he was universally respected. The money that he had saved kept him independent of the help of others.

There came a vagabond to that district, and, finding out that the old man had money beside him, and that he slept alone and at half-a-mile's distance from other inhabited houses, he had the cruelty to conceive the idea to rob and murder the poor old man. It was midnight, and the silence was broken only by the screech of the heron and the murmur of the waves upon the sea-shore. The vagabond knew how to get into the house, for he had been at Faochag before, where he had been served with food and had taken a view of all the apartments. The old man was fast asleep when the vagabond came to his bedside, and with a heavy mallet struck him upon the head, and fractured his skull. He also broke

the old man's hand, and then took away all his money, and departed, thinking that he had killed the old man outright.

But at daybreak Mr. MacIsaac somewhat revived, and made an effort to get out of his house. The shepherd, when he went near to Faochag, found him bleeding and wounded, and soon spread the sad news. The neighbours were terrified to see him in such a condition, and doctors and police came to the house and gave him the best of attendance, so that he gradually recovered, although he only lived a short time afterwards. The Sheriff and Fiscal made an examination, but the old man could not tell who it was that had dealt him the murdering blow. They were suspicious of the neighbouring farmer, and, having got hold of some plausible evidence, apprehended him and placed him in prison; but, as it could not be proved that he had any hand in it, they let him go free.

The police were on the search, and found that a vagabond had been lurking near to Faochag, and that he had afterwards changed a one-pound note at Bealachintic. They followed him and apprehended him at Glasgow, and took him back to

Campbelton. He was brought to trial, and the policemen testified that he had confessed the deed to them from first to last; but there was something faulty in the evidence, and the vagabond received his life, and was only sentenced to four years' transportation.





THE WITCH OF GARTLOSGAN.

I MAY briefly preface the story of “The Witch of Gartlosgan,” by reminding the reader that the first act that decreed punishment of death to witches and those who were in league with them was passed in the year 1563, by the ninth Parliament of Queen Mary; at which time many of the noblest ladies of Scotland (the Ladies Buccleugh, Fowlis, and Kerr, the Countesses of Huntley, Athol, Angus and Lothian, &c.) openly professed their belief in, and employment of, witches and warlocks. It is to that period that the following story evidently refers—a period when the wretched witches were condemned to the stake, there to be “burned in ashes, quick to the death.”





THE WITCH OF GARTLOSGAN.



HE was an old woman to all appearance, and she lived at Gartlosgan, near to Southend; but there was no doubt of her being a witch, for she wrought wonders and had dealings with the Devil.

This was one thing that she did :—
The farmer's wife who lived at Cilirabhain, very close to Gartlosgan, complained greatly that she could not get butter of the cows' milk, though she churned it never so much. And she said to her husband that she would go to Gartlosgan and consult the wise woman on the subject; but her husband forbade

her to go. Nevertheless, the farmer's wife went to the witch and told her all the particulars. And the witch said that she would do nothing that day, but that to-morrow she would go and see her at Cilirabhain.

So she came and saw her, and she told her to go with her to the buyer, and see a gentleman who would tell her all about her milk. So they went; and when she got there it was the Auld Gentleman that she saw; and the Devil caught hold of her and pinched his mark on her arm.

It was about that time that the law was made that all witches should be burned. And they came and apprehended the Witch of Gartlosgan and the farmer's wife, and they found the marks upon both of them. And they took them, together with a third, to Witchburn, at Campbelton, where they put them into hogsheads that had been smeared with tar, and then set fire to them. The two Southend wives burned very briskly, but the third one had got herself two powder plates, which she hid with her in the barrel, so that as soon as the fire had touched her she fled away with them, and was seen no more in Cantire.

It was to Rome that she went ; for, some time after this, when a gentleman from Cantire was visiting Rome, he spied a little creature rocked in a cradle who asked of him a bit of bread. And when he gave it to her she said in Gaelic, “ *Arran blaran hiar is blaran siar eadar da phuileachar ;*” from which he understood that she was the old witch-wife who had flown away from Cantire.





THE OLD WIFE AND THE MAN OF THE CREEL.

THE "Old Wives" in the two following stories, it will be observed, are the "Witches" of popular belief, and the stories themselves may, in more senses than one, be entitled *Sgeulach-dan faoin sheana bhan*, or "Old Wives' Silly Tales."

IN the neighbourhood of Kilellan, Cantire, there is a small farm called *Crois-sbleachdaidh*, or "The Cross of Bowing;" and some say that this bowing meant the bowing in holy worship, but others say that the name of the place meant "The Falling Cross" of Mackay—a person who was addicted to drink, and who used to call here for whiskey on his way home, so that the farm was a



THE TAILOR IN THE MAGIC CREEL.

stumbling-block to him, for he generally fell before he could reach his home.

But whatever the name might mean, at this farm of *Crois-sbleachdaidh* a sprightly young tailor was employed to make clothes for the family. An old pauper woman came to the house asking lodgings, which were granted her, and a bed was prepared for her on the floor at the side of the wall near to the fire. The Tailor slept in the same room, and not having weary limbs he lay in his bed awake, observing the old woman's movements. He watched her get up, and going in a creel, saying some words, which he distinctly heard and remembered.

The old Wife in her creel skipped out at the door, and after a time came back with the creel full of fish, and then laid herself down to sleep. The Tailor thought on trying the same adventure, so he got up and went into the creel, and repeated the old Wife's words. Immediately the creel flew with him to the door, but it was barred. So when the creel could not get out at the door, it flew to the *lum* or smoke-hole in the roof, but it was too narrow for it to get through. So the creel turned

and danced from side to side of the house, the Tailor crying out lustily, which aroused the inmates, who were terrified at the extraordinary scene. Yet nothing would stop the creel, which danced hither and thither, with the Tailor inside it.

At last the old Wife got up and repeated some words, when the creel ceased its merry rant, and the Tailor got out of it without being very much hurt. But the people ever after gave him the name of *Fear-na-craileig*,* or “the Man of the Creel.” A poet made a Gaelic song about the “Man of the Creel,” which was very popular, and the tune to which it was sung was a famous dancing reel, which every piper and fiddler in Cantire could play. Dancers considered it quite a favourite, and would cry, “Play us *Fear-na-craileig*!”

This was a portion of the song:—

“ *Bi rant bi rant horo bi rant,
Bi rant air fear na craileig,
B’e sud an duine fortunach
Gun robh na doirsean cainte,
Oir chailte e air an t-srachadh-ad,
Gun aige art na fàirge.*”

* The creel is also called *cliabh*.

“Behold the sprightly Tailor bled,
Creeping in a creel, man;
And in midnight got out of bed,
To dance a merry reel, man.
The door was barr’d, when on the spree,
Preventing much vexation;
For, he’d be drown’d in the sea
For want of navigation.”

But a Cantire poet has given another version
of the legend, of which I am here enabled to give
a copy.

THE BALLAD OF FERNACREILAG;

OR, THE MAN IN THE CREEL.



NEAR Campbelton there ance did dwell
A man o’ laigh degree,
Whose house three langsome miles
did stan’
O’ distance frae the sea.
And wi’ him lived ane ill woman,
Wha bore nae goodly fame;
She was his lawful marri’d wife,
And she did bear his name.

All in the lown o' Bengolion
 Their cozie house was seen ;
Where the peas-weep skirls its eerie cry
 And the bracken waves sae green.
Now though the house three miles did stan'
 O' distance frae the sea,
Ae morning, waukening frae his sleep,
 The wondering man did see—
The wondering man did see a creel
 Weel fill'd wi' waly fish,
O' the richest kind and rarest kind
 That e'er his heart could wish.
The Pan-cod shone in gowden scales,
 The Crodan lay in raws,
The Haik display'd its buirdly bouk,
 And the Doogey-thoom his claws,
The Clebban and the Maerach-baan,
 Spoot-fish and Clabby-doo,
Wi' Anachan and Brolochan,
 Lay tempting to his view.
Yet he kenn'd he hadna been at kirk,
 Nor had he been at fair ;
And aye he wonder'd to himsel',
 How that the fish cam' there.

But wondering is a witless wark,
And his heart grew light and fain,
For the bonnie fish fill'd up the creel,
And they were a' his ain.
Yet he thought that he that night would watch,
And never close his e'en,
Till he would solve the mystery,
If that it could be seen.
Day pass'd, gloamin' spread her wing
Ower glen and mountain steep,
And wearie beasts gaed waigling hame
To close the day in sleep ;
And the man slips cannilie to bed
(A willy wight was he,)
And he haps the blankets yont his back,
And snores right lustily.
And now the solemn midnight hours
Creep slowly through the dark,
When Bocans roam, and evil things
Are up and at their wark.
And a fearfu' sight he saw, that made
His very hair to stan',
And words he heard, I wad'na say
For a' Knockrioch's lan'

His wife is sitting in a creel
 Rubbin' her taes wi' grease,
And mumblin' ower thae awfu' words
 Fornent the ingle bleeze ;
Till the dog he youl'd upon the hearth,
 And the meikle grey cock crew,
When, bang ! the creel raise aff the floor,
 And out the door it flew.
Now morning rubs her drowsie e'en,
 And rouses up frae sleep,
And the sun he shoves his ruddy nose
 Out-ower Bengolion's steep ;
And frae a troubled dream, the man
 Casts ower his bed his e'e,
And there, wi' fish, the meikle creel
 Weel plenish'd he did see ;
And in the bed, row'd up in claes,
 A solemn aith he's ta'en,
That he wad try the creel himsel'
 Whene'er the day was gane.
The day has pass'd, and darkness deep
 Out-ower the world is spread ;
And the wife, as he had done before,
 Slips cannily to bed.

And the man he loup into the creel
And rubs his taes wi' grease,
And mumbles ower thae awfu' words
Fornent the ingle bleeze ;
Till the dog he youl'd upon the hearth,
And the meikle grey cock crew,
And the creel began to fidge about,
And in the air it flew.
Ah, woe is me ! that men should mak'
Sic practions wi' the deil ;
And gang sic arts to seek for fish
Aboard a meikle creel ;
For, gin a single hair-breadth's wrang,
In what they do or say,
They may, as this puir man soon fan',
Dra' meikle dool and wae ;
For now he fins amang the bauks,
What he should ken before,
That in his hurry he forgot
To open up the door.
Now wad he gein a silver pound
That he were safe frae harm,
And snugly in ayont the wife,
Sae cozie and sae warm.

But na, the creel bobbed up and doun,
Like a hawk upon the wing,
And 'mang the kebbers in the roof
His head and shins did ding.
Till wi' the dinging on the bauk,
The creel it whammiled ower ;
And like a turkey newly shot,
He soss'd upon the floor.
And wi' ae bang out through the roof,
The creel its way has ta'en ;
And whar it gaed or whar it stay'd,
Nae mortal man doth ken.
And now the auld wife waukens up,
Wi' sic an eerie bang,
And she has come out ower the bed,
To see if aught were wrang,
And there her leal auld man she saw
As cauld as ony stane,
Lie belly-flaught upon the floor
Without a sich or grane.
And mony mony wearie days,
He through the house did gae,
Wi' broken head and plaster'd shins,
And e'en o' doolfu' blae.

And now he's wise, and sairly rues
His dealings wi' the deil ;
And Fernacreilag he is ca'ad,
Which means "the Man in the Creel."

MORAL.

A' ye wha in the ramstam race
For fame or this world's gear,
Out-ower the heads o' honest men,
Fou' fain your course wad steer,
See that ye look afore ye loup,
Or ablins ye may rue,
And Fernacreilag he may tell
A useful tale to you.





THE PRATTLING OLD WIFE.



ANY years ago, there lived in Kildavee, Cantire, a *Chailleach bhearo*, or prattling old wife, who possessed wonderful gifts. She had discovered a medicinal well, to which she repaired every seventh year, in order that she might get her youth renewed; and many a time search has been made for this well, but it has not yet been discovered. But this might arise from the circumstance, that, whenever the old Wife paid her visit to the well for the purpose of renewing her youth, she was very careful not to meet with any person on the road: for, if she did, it would deprive the waters of the well of their medicinal charm.

She managed this very well for a length of years;

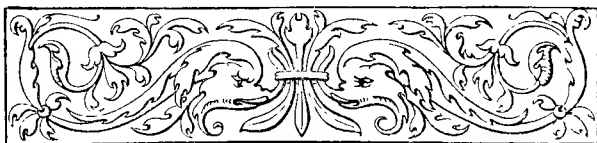
until one day, when she was going to the well, she accidentally met with a man; and although she went on and tried the well, yet its virtues had ceased, and its waters did not bring back her youth. This made her say—

Chairich mi m'fhear, is mo sheac mic,
Fo aon lic an Cildaibhi;
Ach cham e sin areinn mo creach,
'Se neach, a dh'aimish orm an de.

“I buried my husband and my seven sons under a flag-stone in Kildavee; but that was not so much my loss as the man I met with yesterday.”

This prattling old Wife had a son called *Doirbhain*, or “the Turbulent,” because he was bad-natured and disobedient to her; which made her swear that she would never show her face at his door. But when *Doirbhain* saw his mother out in the field, quite destitute, he went to her and led her backwards to his house, so that her oath was not violated. And he took care of her as long as she lived.

The people did not forget this; and whenever they saw a cross child they used to say, “May be he is like *Doirbhain*, and will make the best of the whole family!”



THE APPARITION OF ARRAN



THINK it is evident, (said a Cantire friend), that the landscape of a locality, as presented before the eye, has an effect upon a studious mind. If the locality be mountainous, with high hills and deep valleys, rugged rocks, caverns, and waterfalls, and is solitary and but thinly inhabited, it has a tendency to excite and raise the sublime. In a calm dark night, when the owl and crane screech in search of prey, raising an echo that mingles with the monotonous voices of distant waterfalls; and the angry surge lashing the sullen rocks, a solitary individual, subject to timidity, would be ready to cherish the ideas of spirits, apparitions, and all other terrible objects that are conjured up by the heated imagination.

Now I think that it is in a great measure owing to their scenery that the people of Arran, who are among the best instructed and most pious of any island people in Scotland, should yet, more than any other Scottish islanders, put belief in ghosts



and supernatural beings. I will tell you an instance of this.

About a century ago there lived in Arran an old woman named *Marie Nic Junraidh*, or Mary Henderson, who was exceedingly diminutive, but very courageous and intelligent. She was return-

ing home late, one dark night, and had to cross a bridge which had the reputation of being haunted by something awful, and at which bold strong men had been terrified. But although it was night-time and dark, yet the bold little woman took courage to cross the bridge; and when she came to it, she saw something of an awful appearance standing before her. She would not turn back; so she spake to it, and it spake to her again, and then assumed a human shape, which she readily recognized, and said, "*An tu Fionla?*"—"Art thou Finlay?" The appearance answered that he was Finlay. She said that she had known him when he was alive, but that he had died some years before. He said it was quite true; and that he was the same Finlay.

"Then what is the reason," she said, "that you appear before a frail little woman, and seek thus to alarm me? Why did you not appear before strong men, if you had anything upon your mind that you wished to tell?"

"I did appear several times to strong men," answered the spirit; "but they were always frightened, and ran away without speaking to me.

You have done well to stay and speak to me, and I can now ease my mind. When I was in the flesh I stole some plough-irons ; and I can get no rest until they are restored to their rightful owner. So you will go to-morrow, without fail, to yonder place, and there you will find the plough-irons ; and if you will take them and lay them by the way-side, I shall get my rest, and I will not trouble you or any other person after this.”

The little woman then took courage and proposed many questions to the apparition, all of which he readily answered. He told her how long she would live, also her husband and other members of her family. He also told her the state of her departed friends and neighbours ; and told her to warn a certain neighbour to give up his evil doings, for that he was in great danger. She promised that she would attend to all his demands ; and he then vanished and allowed her to cross the bridge and get safely to her own home. The next morning she went to the spot and found the plough-irons, which she took and left by the way-side, where their previous owner found them ; but it was observed that he did not live long after picking

them up. She gave the warning to the neighbour, and he received it and repented him of his sins ; and both she and her husband died at the time that had been foretold. After her interview with the spirit, the bridge was not haunted by night, nor was anyone troubled by the apparition.

This legend was told to me in my youthful days, sixty years ago, by a pious old woman, a native of Arran, who had been intimate with the little woman and her husband ; and she told me that neither she nor any of her neighbours ever doubted the truth of the story of Mary Henderson and the apparition of Arran.





THE BLACK DOG AND THE MONSTER HAND.



IN my early days I was extremely fond of marvellous stories, and would sit contentedly for hours listening with delight to those who told them. They found out a way to frighten me by placing their hand near to a lighted candle at night, which cast the shadow of a monster hand upon the wall. When I looked upon the shadow, I felt the passion of terror, which was increased when the fingers of the hand began to move. They called this *Cragab-halla*, or “the Monster Hand on the wall ;” and it produced a marvellous story which was told to me as follows :—

On the Island of Colonsay there lived a Fisher-

man who had a family and a boat, and a black dog. The dog was of very little use, and was despised and tossed about by the family, who wondered that the Fisherman would keep such a useless beast, who would not follow any person but his master. The Fisherman did not listen to these complaints, but was kind to the dog, and said no more than repeating in Gaelic, "*Thig l'a Choin dubb fathasd*"—"The day of the Black Dog will come yet." And, according to tradition, it did come; and the Fisherman's words are yet repeated as a proverb in Cantire.

One day the Fisherman, attended by his black dog, and accompanied by some companions, had gone a considerable distance in his boat; and having been pretty successful with their fishing, they proposed to go on shore and pass the night in a cave near to them, and, coming out again in the morning, fish the more, so that they might have a good fishing home with them. So they went on shore, secured their boat, and taking some fish with them for supper, went into the cave and kindled a fire, and soon made themselves warm and comfortable, and prepared their supper, expecting a good night's rest.

On a sudden, the black dog began to growl ; and looking about them, the fishermen saw a monster hand stretching out of a crevice in the cave, and preparing to grasp them ; but, before it could do so, the black dog furiously laid hold of the *Craige*, or Monster Hand, and a fearful combat took place. The fishermen fled from the cave in terror and made for their boat, and set sail without the black dog, leaving him at the combat.

It appears that the black dog gained the victory ; but, swimming home with the hand in his mouth, he was drowned before he could reach the shore. He was found dead in a port that still goes by the names of *Port na Craige*, or “The Port of the Monster Hand,” and *Port a mbadaidh dhubh*, or “The Port of the Black Dog.” The cave is still called *Uamha na Craige*, or “The Cave of the Monster Hand ;” but the hand has never since made its appearance there, so that no one need be afraid to lodge in the cave.





THE CREATURE'S PROPHECIES.



NEAR to Cilellan, six miles south of Campbelton, was the farm of Achan-aclach, where lived a man named Macantompanich. He had three sons who fought in a great battle at Cilachuibeannach, and had to retreat and hide themselves when the enemy followed after them. The father got them hidden during the day-time, but at night they went and lay among the dead, who were exposed without being buried.

And at that time a Creature came among the dead, handling them if they were cold; but, finding one warm, it said, "You will have your fortune in Rome till you die." A second was found warm, and to him the Creature said, "You

will end your fortune in France.” And a third was found warm, and to him the Creature said, “You will end your days on Irish ground.”

And it came to pass that the eldest of the three sons of Macantompanich went away to Rome, and the second went away to France, according to the sayings of the Creature. But the third son would not go to Ireland on any account.

Then a boat came from Ireland, having cattle on board, with sods under their feet; and when the cattle were landed the sods were thrown out upon the shore. This happened to be at South-end, where the third son of Macantompanich was then standing. And he felt the pangs of death coming upon him, and he said, “I did not reach the sod, but the sod has reached me.” And he stretched himself upon them, and yielded his last breath. And so he died on Irish ground as the Creature had prophecied.





THE PROFESSORS OF THE BLACK ART



THREE gentlemen of Cantire, who were respectively the lairds of Lossit, Pennyland, and Carskay, in the Mull, went to Italy that they might learn the sleight-of-hand, or, as the people called it, the Black Art, believing that it was his Satanic Majesty himself who was their teacher. It was reported that he met them at night by the light of the moon, and that the bargain was that he would have one of them for his fee.

So when the three gentlemen thought themselves to be sufficiently learned they prepared to return home. And their teacher grasped at one of them, but the moon was shining brightly, casting

upon the ground a well-defined shadow of the laird; the person grasped at pointed to it, saying, "There he is!" upon which the fiend grasped at the shadow and caught it. And so the laird escaped, but he had no shadow ever afterwards.*

But when they were on the way home the three gentlemen ran short of cash, and as they were not known in that foreign place, they had no credit, and were put to their shifts what to do. So they thought they would try their new-learned arts to procure them their supper and a night's lodging; and they ventured into a fine inn, where they got splendid apartments and a first-rate supper, to which they did great justice, without having a penny in their pockets to pay for it.

Then, when they had feasted and drunk, they thought to play one of their learned tricks. So one of them feigned that he had a strained leg, and he sent for the landlord to draw it. And when the landlord was pulling it with all his strength, the leg came away with him, and the

* The legend does not say which of the three lairds thus figured as the Highland Peter Schlemil.

blood flowed profusely upon the floor, and the gentleman feigned himself to be dead ; and his two companions said, “ You have killed the man ! you have killed the man ! ”

“ Oh ! what shall I do ? ” cried the Landlord, in great terror. “ To think that the likes of this should happen in my house. Oh, that I should pull off a foreign gentleman’s leg ! I will lose my credit ! I will be hanged ! ”

Says one of the Gentlemen, “ I am a great doctor, and if you will give me a fee of a hundred pounds sterling, I will put that man’s leg on him again, and will cure him.”

“ Oh ! do it, do it, or I will be hanged ! ” cried the Landlord. And he went and fetched the one hundred pounds sterling, and paid it down for the fee. And the gentleman took up the leg, and put it back in its place ; and in a few minutes he had the dead man alive again, and walking upon the floor, to the great joy of the landlord, and the profit of the three gentlemen, who made a happy night of it, and went on their way well contented.

When they had got themselves safe back in Cantire, they contracted an umbrage with the

farmer of Grianan, in Carradale Glen, and they tried their black art to frighten the people of the farm. After sunset the people found themselves to be pelted with stones, though they could not see from whence they came ; and they were forced to carry *boins* on their heads to protect them when they went to the barn or byre ; and the cows were “rairing” at night ; and after the people had gone to bed the noise in the house was terrible. The neighbours came in turn to watch ; but when they heard the noises they began to refuse coming. So the people called on the Minister to come for a night ; but he refused. But an old soldier who lived in the neighbourhood said that he would watch for a night, though the Prince of Darkness himself should be in the house ; and he went there with two or three other bold companions, and took his sword with him.

They sat round the fire, amusing themselves with anecdotes, until a late hour, when the noises commenced in another room. The old soldier caught up his sword, and, taking a candle in the other hand, went boldly into the room. The noise was coming from a place between a large chest

and the wall; and, thrusting his sword into the place, he felt something fasten upon it so firmly that he was unable to draw back his sword until his friends came and helped him. When they had got it forth to the light, they found it to be the branch of a thorn-tree, wrought over artfully with threads of all colours. The enemy being conquered, lay quite still upon the floor until the day-light, when they took it out and threw it upon a large bonfire, where it was consumed, and every crack that it gave was like the report of a great gun. And after that the noises ceased at Grianan, and the people returned to their ordinary quietness.





THE HIGHLANDER TAKES THREE
ADVICES FROM THE ENGLISH
FARMER.



IN one of the glens of Cantire there lived a young and loving pair who were blessed with one child, a fine healthy lad. They strove hard to provide themselves with the necessities of life; but their croft was sterile and their crops scanty: and, after many bitter and serious consultations, it was agreed that they should separate for a season, with the hope to make their circumstances better, and that the wife should shift for herself and the lad, and that the husband should travel in search of a situation where he would have food and wages. Their separation was painful; but they comforted

themselves with the promise to be true to each other, and to meet again in better circumstances.

The husband had an aversion to become a soldier; so he sailed to Greenock, and from thence made his way into England, and travelled on until he met with a worthy Farmer, with whom he agreed to work. The bargain was made by signs, for the Highlander had no English; but after a time they came to understand each other quite well, and the Highlander learned a little English. His master respected his servant very much; and the servant was steady, honest, and industrious in his service.

Time passed on, year after year; and every year the Highlander left his wages in his master's hands, until he had a pretty round sum to take. At length he prepared to return home to Cantire; and his master laid down all his wages on the table, and said, "Whether will you lift all your money, or take three advices in its place?"

The Highlander replied, "Sir, your advices were always good to me, and I think it better to take them than to lift the money."

So the master took away the money, and gave him these three advices:—

I. When you are going home keep on the high-way, and take no by-way.

II. Lodge not in any house in which you see an old man and his young wife.

III. Do nothing rashly until you have well considered what you will do.

Besides these three advices, the English Farmer gave the Highlander sufficient money to carry him home; and he also gave him a loaf, which he was not to break until he could eat it with his wife and son. Then they bade farewell.

After travelling several miles the Highlander overtook a Pedlar, who was on his way to Scotland; so they agreed to keep company with one another, and to lodge at a certain town that same night: but as they were travelling quite agreeably, they came upon a by-way which was a great length shorter than the high road, and the Pedlar proposed that they should take it; but the Highlander would not, for he thought of his master's first advice. Then the Pedlar said that he was tired with his burthen, and that he would take the short by-way, and wait until his companion had come forward. So they went each their way,

and the Highlander kept to the high-way until he had come to the place appointed. There he found the Pedlar weeping, and without his pack, for he had been robbed in the by-way. So this was the benefit that the Highlander got by following the first advice of the English Farmer.

Then they walked on together to the town, the Pedlar weeping for the loss of his pack, and saying that he knew where they would get good lodgings. But, when they got to the house, the Highlander saw an old man and a young wife ; so he would not lodge there, for he remembered his master's second advice. But the Pedlar remained in the house, and the Highlander crept into a coal-house in the entry. At midnight he felt some one coming in at the door, and, after remaining a short time, going out again ; but, as he passed him in the dark, the Highlander, with his knife, cut a bit from the wing of his coat, and kept it. In the morning the cry of murder was heard, and it was found that the old man who kept the house had been killed. The authorities of the town came and saw the dead body, and found the Pedlar sleeping in a room ; and when they searched his pockets,

there was a bloody knife found in them ; and as he had no pack or money, they concluded he was a false pedlar, and had murdered the old man to get his wealth. So the Pedlar was apprehended and condemned to be hanged ; and the Highlander accompanied him to the scaffold, and observed among the crowd a young man walking with the young wife of the murdered man ; and the young man's coat was of the same colour as the swatch he had cut from it in the coal-house in the entry. "Hang me !" said the Highlander, "if you pair are not the murderers." So they were apprehended, and acknowledged their crime, and were hanged ; and the Pedlar was set at liberty. And this was the benefit that was got from the Highlander following the second advice of the English Farmer.

It was midnight when the Highlander got back home. He rapped at the door, and his wife got up, and recognized her husband, and lighted a candle. Upon that, the Highlander saw a fine young man lying in the bed ; and he was purposing to step up and kill him, apprehensive that another had taken his place. But he thought

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on his master's advice, and said, "Who is yon man?"

"It is our son!" said his Wife; "he came home from his service last evening, and slept in that bed."

"I should have slain him but for the master!" said the Highlander. So this was the benefit he got from following the third advice of the English Farmer.

The Highlander's joy was now at its height. His son arose from the bed; more peats were put on, and a large fire kindled; and the Highlander then sought a knife to cut the loaf that he had carried all the way from England. With the first slice he found silver money; and when he had cut all the loaf, he found therein all the wages that would have been paid him by his master. So the Highlander got the money and the three advices also; and with the money he stocked a farm and lived comfortably till the end of his days.





HOW THE SPRIGHTLY WEAVER OF GLEN
BARR TAMED THE FARMER'S
WILD DAUGHTER.



ANY years ago in Glen Barr, on the western coast of Cantire, there lived a very respectable Farmer who had a daughter of great beauty, but so wild that she would not suffer any young man to come near her; but if any young man came to court her, or to speak kindly to her, she would run away to the mountains like a wild roe. This grieved her father and mother, and also the young men who would have liked to have had her company.

There was a young sprightly Weaver who also lived in the glen; and he came to the wild young Girl's house with a web that he had woven for her

father. It being customary to give the Weaver a treat of something good after delivering and measuring it, so, as usual, the Weaver was treated with bread, butter, and cheese, and a good glass of whiskey. Then a conversation took place. The Farmer and his wife complained sadly about their wild daughter; but the Weaver said that he would take it in hand to tame her. The Farmer said that his daughter was that wild that he did not think it possible to tame her; but if the Weaver would take it in hand, he would make him a handsome present if he succeeded. So they closed hands on the bargain.

Then at night there came two or three young men to the Farmer's house, wishing to see his daughter; but when she understood that they had come to see her, she took off to the mountains with great speed. The Weaver thought to follow her. He took with him a basket, with bread and cheese, and a bottle of whiskey; and he followed her track as well as he could, until he saw her sitting on the top of a little hill, like a pelican in the wilderness. Near at hand he found a *Bothan-airidh*, or dairy-hut. These *airidhs* were only

used in the summer by the people who drove their cows to uncultivated lands, and kept them round the dairy-huts, milking them, and manufacturing butter and cheese ; and during the rest of the year the *airidhs* were left empty.

The sprightly Weaver went into the dairy-hut and kindled a comfortable fire, and placed his basket all ready. Then he went and sat on a neighbouring hill at some distance from the wild young Girl. The night was not very dark, so that they could see one another pretty well. After they had sat awhile and kept silence, the Weaver cried to the Girl, "What art thou sitting there for?"

"I am fleeing from the young men ;" she answered. "What art thou?"

The Weaver said, "I am a man fleeing from women."

"Keep from me !" she cried.

"Keep from me !" he replied. And so the responses went on, and the echoes were raised from the hills, so that all around seemed to say, "Keep from me ! keep from me !" But still the Weaver and the wild young Girl did not stir from their seats on the tops of the neighbouring hills.

After some time, when they had wearied themselves with crying, "Keep from me!" the Weaver said to her, "Art thou cold, young woman? for this is a very cold night."

"I am very cold," she replied; "but keep from me."

"Yes, yes!" he said; "and you keep from me: don't come near me; for I am a man fleeing from women. But do you know yon *airidh*? If you go to it, you will find therein a comfortable fire, and a basket with bread and cheese, and a bottle of whiskey in it. Go there and get yourself warmed and fed; and I will stay here and watch until you come back; and, if I see any man or woman coming near, I will cry out."

So the wild young Girl went to the *airidh*, and there she found everything quite correct; and she made herself comfortable. And after she had been eating and drinking and getting herself warmed, she came back to her seat on the hill, and she said to the Weaver that she would watch while he went and got himself warmed, and would cry out if any man or woman drew near. So the Weaver went; and when he came back he told

her what a warm house the *airidh* was ; and that if she would go into it and creep close to the wall on the one side, he would creep to the other side, and would keep from her.

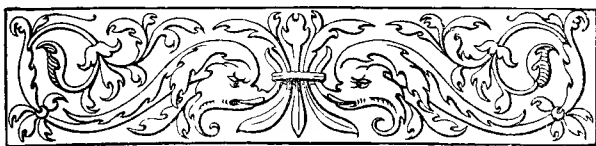
So she agreed to this, and they both went into the *airidh*, and crept close to the two opposite walls. Then the Weaver said, "This is poor work. We may lie closer to the fire and get ourselves warmed." So they came a little closer to the fire. Then, after a while, the Weaver said, "The wind draws in from the door and cuts me on the shoulder. If I was not a man fleeing from a woman, I would ask you to let me come on your side the fire, and get me out of the wind." She bade him come and fear nothing, promising that she would not harm him. So he crept to her side of the fire ; and finding that they were not harmed, they crept still closer, and became quite friendly, and partook of the bread and cheese and whiskey.

Then said the sprightly Weaver, "If all women had been like to thee, I would not have fled from them."

Then said the wild young Girl, "If all men had been as thou, I needed not to have feared them."

So they agreed that they could not do better than to marry each other. And when they went back together to the Farmer's house, the young girl told her father that she had been tamed, and would never run away to the mountains. So the sprightly Weaver, for his reward, had the Farmer's wild Daughter in marriage.





HOW THE DUKE OF ARGYLL PERSONATED
A HIGHLAND DROVER AT A LONDON
FENCING SCHOOL.



HIGHLAND drover went from Cantire to London in charge of a herd of cattle. When he had given them in charge to his employer, he strolled through the streets, admiring the sights of the wonderful city. He was easily known to be a stranger by his dress, as well as by his unfeigned astonishment at everything that he saw. He moved slowly along the crowded thoroughfares until he found himself before the door of a Fencing School. At the side of the door was a table, on which lay a beautiful staff or fencing cudgel. It was laid there by the scholars, so that anyone who

wished to try a fencing bout with them might have the opportunity of doing so,—the scholar laying down a sum of money, which would be doubled by his antagonist, and the whole be taken by the successful combatant.

The Highland Drover looked at the fencing cudgel for some time, not knowing for what it was laid there, and he then took it up in his hand. Now to take up the cudgel was a legal challenge; so he had no sooner begun to handle it than a scholar came out and laid down half-a-crown on the table, telling the Highlander that he must double that sum. “For what?” said the Drover.

“Because you have taken the cudgel in hand,” said the Scholar.

“Will it cost me a crown?” said the Drover.

“It may cost you your crown,” said the Scholar; “perhaps I shall crack it. Come in and see.” So the scholar led the drover into the Fencing School, though the Highlander was for making off with the cudgel, thinking that he had purchased it for a crown.

But when he was inside the school he soon found out his mistake. The scholar gave him his

cudgel and put him on his guard, and then the blows flew about his head, so that his skull was like to be cracked. Then the Highlander thought he had had enough of this rough play, and called to the scholar to hold his hand. And the scholar did so, and put the money in his pocket; and the drover discovered the meaning of the game costing him a crown.

Argyll was in London at the time; and it was told him what had happened to the Cantire man, and he took notice of his defeat, and sent a servant for him. And when the Drover came to Argyll's house, the Duke spoke to him in Gaelic, and the Highlander was pleased, for he had not heard the language since he left the Kintyre. And the Duke told him to shift clothes with him, and to look out of window and see how he would come on with the fencers. The Drover did this, and shifted clothes with Argyll.

The Duke then went by a back way to the street where the Drover had perambulated, and he walked in imitation of him, using great awkwardness. And when the scholars saw him they wished that he would come their way again; and

they watched his movements with ungovernable mirth, having a strife who would get at him the first. Then he came to the Fencing School door, and took up the cudgel from the table; and one of the scholars jumped out to him, and said, "Put down your crown."

"Why?" said the Duke.

"Because you have taken up the cudgel," said the Scholar. So they went into the school, and were presently hard at cudgelling.

Now the members of the Argyll family were proverbial for being expert swordsmen and fine fencers; and the Scholar soon found that he had got more than his match, and he retired, leaving the Duke his money. Then another came out, and he soon was cudgelled to bleeding, and he also went in, leaving the Duke his money. And a third scholar came out, but it fared no better with him than with the others, and he went in bleeding and wounded, and leaving the Duke his money. And so it happened with a fourth, and yet with a fifth, till in this way all the school had suffered, and had gone in, leaving Argyll their money.

At length the master of the Fencing School

came out to challenge the Duke; but Argyll said that he would not close with him unless he would lay down a guinea. The master did this, and they were soon hard at cudgelling; and if the scholars had reason to complain, their master had still greater reason, being more severely wounded. So Argyll lifted the money and went away under a shower of curses; the master saying that it could be none other than the fiend in human shape.

Then the Duke came back to the Highlander and shifted his clothes with him, and gave him all the money that he had lifted from the master and his scholars. And he also gave the Drover this piece of advice, that while he remained in London, he might look at a thing as long as he pleased, but that, unless he had full liberty to do so, he must never handle anything, or he might perchance get a worse cudgelling than he had received at the Fencing School.





HOW ARGYLL BEFRIENDED A YOUNG SOLDIER.



IN the year 1745 the Duke of Argyll was sent to France, having command of the British forces; and “a battle became indispensable.” Argyll had his men in good order, but found that, although they had plenty of powder, yet, through some unaccountable mistake, no shot had been sent—a circumstance which made him afraid that his men had been betrayed and sold to the enemy.

The Duke walked to and fro in the front of his army, evidently showing that he was much concerned, yet none of the officers dared venture to speak to him to ask him what was the cause of his

trouble. But, at length, one of his own countrymen, a young soldier from Argyleshire, spoke to him in Gaelic, and said, "I know that Argyll is troubled; oh! tell me what is the matter."

Argyll replied, "It is not to be wondered at that I am troubled. We are to fight to-morrow, and we have no shot; so we must all be killed or made prisoners, for we have not a bullet to discharge."

"Is that all?" said the young Soldier.

"And plenty!" said the Duke.

"Please your grace, I can tell you a remedy. No great way off I see a church roofed with lead sufficient to make shot for us on the morrow."

Argyll smiled and sent his men to the church, where they melted the leaden roof and made themselves plenty of shot. And the next day they fought against the Frenchmen and won the victory. The day after what must Argyll do but call the young Soldier to him and tell him that it was he who won the victory for them, and that he would be advanced to the office of a captain. So he was dressed in uniform, and made a Captain. But after a short space he came back, begging him to unmake him

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from being a Captain, and to restore him to his former position of a simple soldier.

“What is all this for?” said the Duke; “are you not happy?”

“No,” replied the young Soldier; “for the other Captains are for ever taking their fun of me. At dinner I cannot handle my knife and fork, and I am made unhappy.”

“That can easily be cured,” said the Duke. So the next day, when the army was paraded and all the Captains were assembled, the Duke walked up to the young soldier, and took his arm, and walked with him arm in arm up and down in front of the army. And when the other Captains saw the great respect that was paid by the Duke to the young man, they took heed not to ridicule him for the future; and in a short time he was as able to handle his knife and fork as anyone of them; while as for his sword no one of them could handle it better.





HOW ARGYLL REWARDED AN OLD SOLDIER.



EARLY a century ago, in the town of Oban, there lived an old man, supported by his son who kept a grocery. The old man had been a soldier in his day, and had fought under the command of the Duke (of Argyll) in Flanders; and he felt a strong desire to see his Grace before he should die. He put on his best clothes, and travelled slowly on to Inverary, and when he reached his destination, he sauntered about the castle, not venturing to call, but expecting to meet the Duke taking his evening walk, when he would have an opportunity of seeing him at least, and, perhaps, have the good fortune of speaking to him.

The Duke made his appearance, and the old man uncovered and bowed to his Grace. The Duke thought he wanted charity, and offered him a piece of white money. The old man said that he did not come for charity. "Then what brought you here?" said Argyll.

"I came to see his Grace, the Duke," said the old man.

"And what do you see about him," said the Duke, "but an old frail man like yourself?"

"I saw another day of it," said the old man. "I saw the Duke before this time."

"Where did you see him?"

"I saw him in the French Flanders and at Fontenoy."

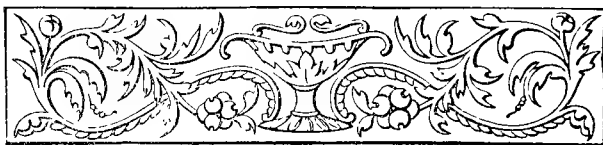
"And wast thou at Fontenoy?"

"I was," said the old man. The Duke then looked upon him with a smile, and put several questions to him—how he was supported in his old age, and if he had a pension. The old man said that he was well supported by his son, who had been a pedlar for some time, and having made up a little money, had set up a grocery in Oban, and was coming on well. The Duke then asked him:

if he could get any earning (employment) towards his own support? The old man told him that he could not do so, and that he had no pension; but that his son was a good son, and did not grudge him what he gave him.

The Duke ordered the old man to hold out his hand; and he put a shilling in it, saying, "From this day to the day of your death you will have a shilling for each day settled on you by me, until you have no need of meat or clothing." The Duke then took the old man with him as a familiar companion, and showed him all the fine things about the castle, and entertained him for several days before he sent him back to Oban. And he regularly paid him his pension till the day of his death.





THE DOCTOR'S LESSON.



HERE was a gentleman who lived in Cantire, and had an only son, whom he sent to Edinburgh to be made a doctor. He bound him to a celebrated Surgeon for a term of years, paid his 'prentice-fee, saw that his indentures were properly signed, and then left him, giving him his blessing and some good advice. The young man was very steady and well-behaved, and he wrought hard and made great progress in his profession, until he had accomplished the term of his apprenticeship to the satisfaction of his master. He then prepared to come back home to Cantire; but first asked his master if he wanted any more learning to make him a complete doctor.

Said the Master, " You have all the learning that I can give you, except one lesson."

" Then give me that one lesson, and let me go," said the young Man.

" You can go," replied the Master; " but I cannot give you the lesson unless you will first pay me down the sum of one hundred guineas."

Then the young man bade his master farewell, and went back to Cantire very sorrowful, for he knew that his father would not give him a fraction more money, because he had so frequently grudged the great expenses he was put to in keeping him so long at Edinburgh. But his mother observed that he was sad, and asked him if he had given away his heart to a Lowland lassie. Then he told her that it was not for love that he was dejected; but that after he had laboured hard at his doctoring, and thought he had learned everything, his master had told him it would take another lesson to make him perfect, and that he would not give him the lesson until he had paid him a hundred guineas. " And I am sure," said the young Man, " that my father will not spend any more money on me; and therefore I am sad to think that I fall short of being a perfect doctor for the lack of one lesson."

Then said his Mother, "You keep up your spirits, and have no more to do with this black melancholy. I will get you your lesson."

"Alas!" said the Son, "it cannot be done without the hundred guineas."

Then his mother told him that she had saved a hundred guineas that his father knew nothing of, and that he should have them to take to the doctor and learn his lesson. So the young man joyfully went back to his master with the hundred guineas in his pocket.

Then the Doctor lifted the money, saying these words: "Apprehension killeth, and Apprehension cureth." And that was his hundred-guinea lesson.

Then the young man went back to Cantire more sad than ever, to think that he had given such a very large sum for such a very small lesson. Afterwards he went to France, and there he remained for several years, until he became a great doctor. Then he came back to Edinburgh, where he set himself up in grand style as a physician, and called himself the French Doctor. And, one day, it happened that he met with his old master in the street; but his master did not know him again,

for the young man had hair upon his lip, and had made himself like to a Frenchman. But the two got into talk; when, "Oh!" says the French Doctor, "you are unwell."

"Unwell!" said the Master; "that cannot be. I was never more in health than now."

"So you may think," said the French Doctor; "but I tell you that you are unwell. I see death staring you in the face. My good man, I do not wish to needlessly alarm you, but it is better to tell you the truth: you will be a dead man in twenty-four hours."

"A dead man! oh, are you not silly to talk of dead men?" said the Master. And he went away laughing. But, for all his laughter, he took a great fear; and he went home, and he laid himself down on his bed, crying out that he was dying. And the doctors were sent for; but they could not understand what was the matter with him. And one doctor said one thing, and one another; and no two of them agreed. Then said the Master, "O, bring the French Doctor to me, or I shall die!"

So they brought him the French Doctor. And

the French Doctor looked at him and said, "You will be dead in less than four-and-twenty hours, unless you will agree to take my cure."

"I will take it," said the Master.

"But it will cost you a hundred guineas," said the French Doctor.

"I will pay it," said the Master.

"Then, if you will put down the hundred guineas, I will have you quite well and walking on the floor before two hours," said the French Doctor.

The Master counted out the hundred guineas, and the French Doctor lifted them.

"Now! do you know me?" said the French Doctor, as he came to the bed-side.

The Master looked at him, and said, "No! I never saw you till I met you in the street."

"You are mistaken," said the other. "Years ago I was your apprentice; and you could not complete my education until you had taught me one lesson. For that one lesson you made me pay you a hundred guineas. Do you remember what it was? 'Apprehension killeth, and Apprehension cureth.' That was your hundred-guinea lesson to

me, and I have wished you to experience it on yourself. There is nothing wrong with you but Apprehension ; so get out of bed.”

Then he mixed him a cordial, and within the two hours he had him walking about, quite well, according to his promise. And neither of them ever forgot the Doctor's Lesson.





AMONG the numerous stories that are told concerning shipwrecks off the Mull of Cantire, I select the following, merely concealing the names and date. It is as "sensational" as a work of fiction, but was told to me as a narrative of facts. I will call it

THE LADY OF THE WRECK.



HERE had been a dreadful wreck off the Mull, and many souls had been hurried into eternity within sight of land. A gentleman who was interested in the fate of some relatives who had been on board had hastened to the spot, desirous of viewing the scene of the disaster, even though he should not haply find any traces of those who were lost. It was two days after the wreck, but many of the bodies had not yet been recovered, and trunks,

boxes, and various kinds of personal property were either being swept on shore or picked up at sea by the boatmen. So many of these men were now engaged on the work that the gentleman was unable to hire a properly-equipped boat to convey him to the spot. In his dilemma he appealed to a fisherman whom he had accidentally encountered, and whom he eventually persuaded to launch his boat, promising, as he was an experienced oarsman, to assist him in sailing or sculling his little craft.

When they were well on their way, and were nearing the island off which the wreck had taken place, the gentleman noticed that his companion, whose strange manners had already attracted his attention, was gazing wildly around him, with his eyes intently fixed on a white object that could be seen not far from them tossing to and fro upon the dancing waves. Presently they were close beside it, and as the boat plunged into the trough of the sea a huge billow raised the white form on high,—where for a moment it stood, as it were, poised over the boat like a thing of life—the form of a woman, with wide-open eyes and loose streaming hair, clad

in her night-dress, and tightly pressing an infant to her breast. The effect of this apparition on the two men in the boat was such as to paralyze their exertions either to guide their craft, or to draw the body on board. In the moment when the wave thus raised it up before them, and lent to its pulseless form somewhat of the motion of life, the gentleman had recognized it as the body of one of those relatives of whom he had come in search—the wife of a captain, who, with her husband and only child, had barely left their well-loved home, and, when well-nigh in sight of it, had sunk in their watery grave. The white figure, clasping the babe to its breast, seemed to look down upon them for an instant with a melancholy gaze, and then, as suddenly, sank with the fall of the wave, and disappeared from their view.

But the emotions with which the gentleman saw this were overpowered by still stronger feelings. His boatman's wild look and manner had increased; and when the white figure of the lady stood over them, he flung himself on his knees in a paroxysm of terror, crying in shrill agony, "She has risen from the dead to confront me! Oh, my

lady! spare me! spare me! It was a foul deed, and I have sorely repented me of it, and asked for mercy. I fled the spot, and never thought to see your face again; but the sea has given up its dead before the last great day, and you have risen in judgment against me!" And with that he threw himself down in the bottom of the boat, wildly imploring for pardon. Although he spoke in Gaelic, yet the gentleman fully understood him, being well acquainted with the language.

Presently the fisherman sprang to his feet; but by this time the corpse of the lady had floated onwards; and as the boat was under full sail, they saw the white figure no more. The man strained his wild-looking eyes in search of the form whose sudden appearance had wrought so powerful an effect upon him; and when he missed it, dashed his bonnet from his head, and passing his hand over his brow, said, in a hollow voice, "Was it a dream? or was it my lady rising from the dead?" Then he muttered, "A foul deed, a foul deed! Blood must have blood! Her eyes looked me through and through, deep into my guilty soul! Oh, my God, what a wretch have I been!"

He was so wildly gesticulating as he muttered these words, and his manner and actions were altogether so much those of a man beside himself, that, as the gentleman knew that the death of the lady whose corpse had so singularly appeared to them was the result of the shipwreck, and could not in any way have been caused by his companion, he could come to no other conclusion than that the man was now a maniac—one, perhaps, whose lurking disease had been suddenly brought to a crisis by the strange sight that the waves had brought before him. The gentleman, therefore, addressed him in his own Gaelic, with soothing words, and told him that they must attend to their boat and shorten sail, and run into the island whither they were bound. But his words had far from their intended effect; for they seemed to excite the man to a fresh frenzy. “Run in there!” he cried. “Never! Do you think I have forgotten that bay, and the boat, and my lady and her bairn? Is she to confront me again? I see it all now! You have come to drag me to my doom! Blood for blood! that’s fair enough; but it must be the strongest man that wins.” And in an instant he

had drawn a clasp-knife, and had cut through the ropes, while the sail flapped overhead in a way that threatened to capsize the boat. In another moment he had leaped across the thwarts, and with his gleaming knife in his upraised hand, and with madness flashing from his eyes, threw himself upon his companion.

The gentleman had but an instant to gather himself together for defence against the maniac's attack; but that instant, happily for him, was sufficient. He had seized the boat-hook, and with a well-directed blow he brought it down upon the man's bare head, and laid him senseless and bleeding in the bottom of the boat. There, with the severed ropes, he tightly bound him to the thwarts, and did his best to remedy any bad effects that might result from the blow, by staunching the blood and bandaging the wound. With some difficulty he succeeded in taking in the sail and righting the boat, which had been shipping water, and had many times been in danger of being capsized. His situation, however, was still a critical one; they were drifting out to sea; and the fisherman was giving signs that he was recovering from the

effects of the blow. If the cords should yield to his maniacal strength, then the chances against the gentleman's safe return to land were few indeed.

But fortunately a boat hove in sight; and they answered his hail, and bore down to his relief, greatly astonished to receive his explanation of the state in which they beheld his companion. They knew him, it seemed, although they said that he was a new comer, and, during the brief time he had lived among them, had kept himself aloof from their society, and been distinguished for a morose and surly manner. Nevertheless they did not appear to be astonished that the man had proved himself to be insane; and this was all that the gentleman thought fit to tell them; but when he had seen the man taken on shore, and properly cared for—the man himself now being as quiet and reserved as he had been previous to the appearance of the *Lady of the Wreck*—he privately told to the authorities what he had seen and heard, in order that any investigation that they deemed necessary should be made into the strange circumstances of the case. The matter was gone into and sifted as much as possible; but nothing came

to light; and the fisherman's expressions were regarded as the empty ravings of a poor maniac.

In the mean time the corpse of the lady, still clasping her child, had been recovered, and had been buried, together with her husband, in their own family vault.

The circumstances under which the relative had first seen her floating body would have been imprinted on his memory as nothing more than a terrible and remarkable episode in his life's history, had he not been in Cantire a few years afterwards, and requested to visit the fisherman who was supposed to be on his death-bed, and had asked to see him. The gentleman obeyed the summons and went to the man's hut; having learned from the person who fetched him that the man had not shown any signs of insanity since that memorable day, although he had always maintained his reserved and peculiar manner, and was looked upon by his neighbours as one who had "something on his mind;" and the general belief was that he had been a smuggler, and had done some deed which had driven him into hiding; and for which he repented. The gentleman, therefore, expected

to hear some revelation concerning a deadly struggle between a smuggler and preventive officer ; and was greatly amazed when the man made to him the following confession.

Hearing that he was at hand, he said, he had sent for him, not only to ask his pardon for raising his murderous hand against him, but also, before the breath left his body, to explain the words he had uttered on that day concerning the poor lady who, as he had been told, was the gentleman's relative. He had been her servant, but had been dismissed by the Captain for misconduct. He had begged her to take him back into her service ; and she, by her husband's wish, had refused his request. The man swore to be revenged ; and that same evening saw his mistress, with her baby in her arms, sitting in a boat, awaiting her husband's crossing the channel from the main-land. The boat was floating at the rope's length distance from the shore, and the lady's back was turned towards him as she watched for her husband. The man crept behind some rocks, and, unseen by the lady, cut the rope that held the boat to land. It floated away so gently that for a short time she was

unaware of what had happened. Then she called for help; but no help was at hand: and in a few minutes she was out of hearing, for the boat had drifted into the current, and was being rapidly carried down the channel and out to sea. The man watched from his hiding-place until it became a speck upon the waters and was lost to view.

He watched the husband's return—heard the consternation excited by the disappearance of the wife and child—saw persons sent out to search in all directions; and then, fearing that suspicion might fall upon him, he contrived to get a boat and cross to the main-land. Arrived there, he made his way to the place where he afterwards took up his abode, and gained his livelihood as a fisherman. But he made no friends, and rarely spoke, unless he was spoken to, and then made the briefest of replies. Least of all would he have spoken on the subject which had now become a horror and a dread to him, haunting him by night and day. His great and daily pervading fear was lest he should be delivered up to judgment, and consigned to the gallows as the lady's murderer; consequently her name never crossed his lips: and mingling as

he did so little with others, he never heard her fate mentioned by them. But this was hardly to be wondered at ; more especially in such a sequestered locality where news travelled but slowly.

Only three months of this life had passed—though every day had been to the guilty man as a living death—when the dreadful wreck happened that had brought the gentleman to the spot, and had led to his engaging with the fisherman to convey him to the scene of the disaster, which, as it happened, took him not so very far from that other scene of a tragedy that had burnt itself into the fisherman's brain. There the heaving wave had suddenly raised up before him the forms of the lady and her child, of whom he believed himself to be the murderer. Their ghastly appearance, making a palpable reality of the vision that had been daily haunting him, had subverted his reason, which was already tottering in the balance, and had led to the scene that followed. The dying man now implored his hearer to pardon him for making the attempt upon his life ; which, he said, was the only pardon that he could hope to obtain ; his guilt, in hurrying to destruction the hapless mother and her babe,

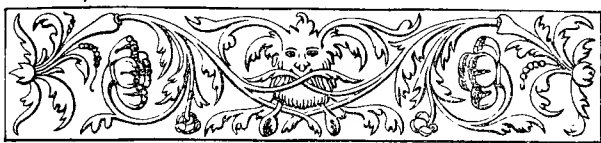
being too great to be pardoned either here or hereafter.

The dying man's thankfulness and astonishment may be conceived when his visitor explained to him that although he had, in truth, been guilty of their death, so far as his purpose went, yet that a merciful providence had interposed, and had saved his victims from the cruel fate to which he had consigned them. The gentleman said that he had heard from his relatives the particulars relating to the events of that evening when the lady and her child were cast adrift in the boat—a circumstance which had been regarded as an accidental one, and which ever would have been remembered as such, had it not been for the confession just now made. The man had not been seen to do the deed ; and it had been considered that the rope, by fraying against the sharp edge of the rock, had thus been severed and allowed the boat to drift into the channel. The swift current bore it rapidly towards the open sea, and the poor lady had quite given up herself as lost, when a small schooner came in sight. Her signals of distress were seen by those on board, who at once sent off a boat to her assistance, and

rescued her from her perilous fate ; and before the morning's dawn, she and her infant were safe in their own home.

The fisherman lived long enough to hear and comprehend this explanation ; but though he poured forth fervent thanks that his victims had escaped his deadly designs, he could not forget that he had been a murderer in thought and purpose if not in actual deed ; and his last moments were filled with terrible and incoherent cries for mercy to that white-robed figure which he fancied had again risen up before him, as it had done on the crest of the billow, clasping its dead babe to its breast, and thrilling his horror-stricken soul with the glassy gaze of death.





HOW DR. SMITH BUILT HIS HIGH- LAND CHURCH.

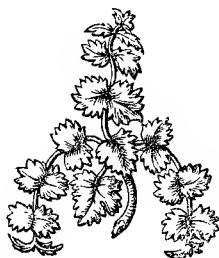


WHEN Dr. Smith wished to build his Highland Church at Campbelton, there was great feeling shown against him by the heritors. One of these heritors, Colonel —, meeting the Doctor one day in Main Street, close by the cross, threatened to ill-use him in the street. “If you strike me,” said the Doctor, “you will never strike another afterwards.” The Colonel struck him, but lightly, on the chest; and then, as the Doctor did not resent it, or return the blow, he walked away. But the Colonel was never seen on the street after that day; for he went home, took to his bed, and in a few days was in eternity. It was then looked upon that the Doctor had prophesied this.

When the Doctor had succeeded in arranging for the erection of the church, the contractor expected that its foundation-stone would be laid with masonic rites. The Doctor refused, saying that he wanted no Popery about his Protestant church. The master-builder, therefore, it is said, in a rage, wickedly laid the stone in the name of the Devil.

Dr. Smith had been advised to preach a sermon at the laying of the foundation-stone of the church; but he declined, saying that he would keep his sermon until the church should be completed and opened. He was never destined to preach it; for death laid his hand upon him ere the church was finished. Several calamities had befallen the building during the erection. A large portion of it fell, from insufficient foundations, and lay a long time in ruins, to the great grief of the poor Highlanders. Then the work recommenced, and the walls again rose; but still they were too slight, and it was found that they would not carry the weight of the roof, which had then to be propped up with great beams. Other disasters quickly followed. On the night of the twelfth of November, a great thunder-storm burst over the town, and seemed to reserve

its most violent effects for this ill-starred church. It was struck by the lightning; the spire was shattered, the windows were destroyed, and the whole edifice was injured. Once again it was made strong; and a subscription was gathered for the erection of a spire strong and high, and an ornament to the town of Campbelton





HOW DR. NORMAN MACLEOD TOLD
FORTUNES AND MANAGED
BIG CHARLIE.



R. SMITH was succeeded by a young minister of twenty-four years of age, who eventually attained a greater reputation for ability, learning, and eloquence than was possessed even by his predecessor. This was the Rev. Norman Macleod, D.D., whose father (who was also the Rev. Norman Macleod, D.D.) was the minister of Morvern, Argyleshire for nearly half a century, and whose distinguished son (who is also the Rev. Norman Macleod, D.D.) is one of her Majesty's Chaplains for Scotland, and the well and widely known editor of *Good Words*.

Of these three Rev. Dr. Norman Macleods, the second of that name was born at Morvern Manse, in 1784; was educated at Edinburgh and Glasgow, where he gained high honours; was appointed an assistant minister in the parish of Kilbrandon in 1806, and there laid the foundation of his future prosperity. Dr. Smith, on his death-bed, recommended his parishioners to apply to the patron (the Duke of Argyll) in behalf of a presentation to young Mr. Macleod. His advice was taken, and was successful in its result; and the first service in the newly-finished church was that of the ordination of Dr. Smith's successor, the Rev. Norman Macleod. This was in 1808, and he remained in Campbelton for sixteen years, beloved by his people, and exerting an influence whose effects for good yet remain there. In 1825 he left Campbelton for Campsie, where he remained eleven years, and was then appointed to that Gaelic chapel, which he soon raised into the Parish Church of St. Columba, Glasgow. Here he laboured until November 25, 1862, when he died, in the seventy-ninth year of his age, full of honours no less than years. The day of his funeral would have been

the eightieth anniversary of his birth. He was a Moderator of the General Assembly and Dean of the Chapel Royal. He was also honoured with the intimate friendship of the Queen and the late Prince Consort, and had been kindly received by King William IV when he presented to him his metrical translation into the Celtic of the Psalms of David, specially prepared for the Irish. His contributions to Gaelic literature were numerous and important;* he largely helped the education scheme of the Church of Scotland; and his labours and eloquent addresses on behalf of the poor Highlanders during the two potato-crop famines of 1836-7 and 1846-7 made his name famous throughout England, and greatly assisted to raise that sum of nearly 200,000*l.* that was sent to the relief of the sufferers.

During the sixteen years that Dr. Macleod was minister of Campbelton he did much to drive away the vain superstitions of the people, and was par-

* For example: his contributions to the new edition of the Gaelic Scriptures, his Gaelic School-books, and Gaelic Monthly Magazine.

tially successful. *Apropos* to this, the following anecdote has been told to me.

On one day when Dr. Macleod had gone over to Glasgow, he observed a crowd of Highland reapers standing at the door of a fortune-teller, and going in one after another to have their fortunes told. They did not know him, although he recognized them : for it so happened that they had come from Morvern, in Argyleshire, the Doctor's native place.

"What are you doing here?" said the Doctor.

"We are getting our fortunes told us;" was the reply. "*Tho fear fiosacha an so.* There is a fortune-teller in here, who tells us our fortunes for a shilling."

"Silly people!" cried the Doctor. "Come to me! I will tell you your fortunes for nothing. Come here, you girl, and show me your hand."

She came, and showed him her hand. He remembered her well ; but he pretended to read her palm, and then said, "Oh, woman! you have had an illegitimate child!" The others knew this to be the case, and mightily wondered to hear a stranger tell what was true.

Meantime the Doctor had spied another woman of whom he knew something. "Come here to me," he said, "and I will tell you your fortune."

She would have hung back, but the others pushed her forward; and the Doctor caught hold of her hand, and began to read her palm. At length he cried, "Oh, woman! you are worse than the other, you have had two illegitimate children!" Which the rest knew to be the truth.

Then, when they wondered at this, the Doctor made himself known to them; and, after giving them a severe rebuke for their folly in believing that mortal man could tell their fortunes, sent them away from the fortune-teller's door both the richer and the wiser for not having entered it.

Another anecdote of Dr. Macleod was also told to me by one of his old parishioners. It ran as follows:—

During the time that the Rev Mr. Macleod was the parish minister of Campbelton—it was before he was made a Doctor—there lived in Campbelton a certain gallant captain, who was best known by the name of Big Charlie. He had fought with great distinction in foreign countries,

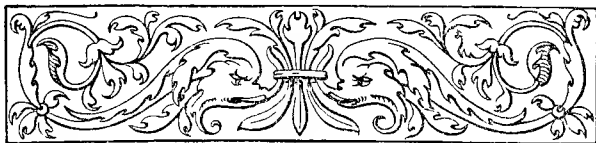
and had come back to Cantire with an abundance of wealth, determined to spend it in his native town of Campbelton. One day, he was finding fault with Mr. Campbell's factor at Saddell, and they both made use of angry words towards each other. The Captain ridiculed the Factor with regard to his parentage, because he was a poor man's son. But the Factor, on the other hand, maintained that he was as good as the Captain any day; and that, though he was not so heavy a man, he would face him in any way that he would choose for fighting. The Captain said "done!" upon the challenge; and it was settled that they should fight a duel with loaded pistols, the next day, at a certain hour, on the shore of Machrehanish. They also selected their seconds and a doctor, and then went home to make their preparations. The Factor lived at Dalintober at that time, and he spent part of the night in drawing up his accounts and making his will.

Now, as good fortune would have it, the Rev. Mr. Macleod in some way got a notice of what was intended; and, knowing that the law was dead against duelling, he had the Sheriff and officers all

ready prepared on the field of battle to arrest the combatants when they came forth to their fight. This was done ; for, no sooner had they taken up their position on the ground, than the Minister and Sheriff and officers appeared from behind a sand-bank, and called upon the seconds to stop loading. The reverend gentleman then took speech in hand, and with his wonted eloquence addressed them, and made them so thoroughly ashamed of themselves, that, before he parted from them, he had got the Captain and the Factor reconciled, and had made them shake hands.

But the reverend gentleman was a beautiful young man, and during the whole of his ministry in Campbelton he was for ever doing good in reconciling parties. He was greatly beloved by all denominations ; and it was even said that the very Catholic Priest, when he was on his death-bed, sent for the Rev. Mr. Macleod, and—as some said—died a Protestant.





HOW MR. PINKERTON ATTENDED
WEDDINGS AND NARROWLY
ESCAPED MARRIAGE.



THE Rev. Mr. Pinkerton was the minister of the Relief Church, Campbelton, at the commencement of the present century. The members of the Relief Church and those of the United Secession Church have now merged into one, called the United Presbyterians, who occupy the church with the tall Gothic tower that is such a conspicuous object in the views of Campbelton. But in Mr. Pinkerton's day the Lowlanders of his flock were very exclusive, and were continually at feuds with the Highlanders. Mr. Pinkerton was frequently successful in mediating between the two parties, and in re-

moving the prejudices of either side. He was of a handsome person, affable in manner, and kind in disposition.

He was often called upon to perform the marriage ceremony; and he scarcely thought the wedding was complete unless blind Donald Dewer was there with his fiddle to amuse the company. This Donald was father to the great Dr. Dewer, Principal of Aberdeen College, who, when a boy, was accustomed to lead his blind father to the various places where the company danced, and he often slept in a barn or out-house on a piece of straw until the dancing was over, and his father was ready to return home. These wedding-feasts were very valuable to the fiddler, to whom it was the custom of the dancers of the *shemit reel* to present a piece of silver.

Mr. Pinkerton was fond of conversing with Donald Dewer, and generally remained for the wedding festivities. He himself was a skilful player on the fiddle, and would not object to play a tune or two for the amusement of the company. Weddings in those days, especially in rural districts, were attended by all the neighbours, who

amused themselves with anecdotes, songs, and dancing. There was always plenty of good cheer provided, besides the mysterious bread and cheese that was presented to the bride; and it was a gay time for all, from the “winning the kail” to the bedding and the flinging of the bride’s stocking.

One of the anecdotes that Mr. Pinkerton used to tell related to himself, and was as follows:—

When he was young and attending college in Glasgow he took a walk out in company with a fellow-student. They had not travelled far along the highway, when they observed in a gentleman’s park a mad bull, who was bellowing fearfully, and prancing about a lady who was stretched upon the ground, enveloped in a scarlet shawl. They could not tell whether she was alive or no, but Mr. Pinkerton was moved with pity, and resolved to risk his life in order to remove the body of the lady. He told his fellow-student that he would advance to the bull, and provoke him to chase him, and that when by running and stratagem he had succeeded in drawing away the infuriated animal to a convenient distance, his companion should then approach the lady, and carry her away to a

place of safety. This being agreed to between them, Mr. Pinkerton bravely advanced to the bull, and by throwing stones at him quickly drew his attention from the lady upon himself. Presently the bull made a rush at him, which Mr. Pinkerton adroitly avoided, and then commenced his retreat to the farther side of the park, the animal following him. Mr. Pinkerton was a very swift runner, and a good leaper; and he had just succeeded in jumping over the boundary fence, when the bull thrust his horns into the bank.

As speedily as he could, Mr. Pinkerton made his way round the park, and got to that place from whence he started, where he found his fellow-student with the lady. She was alive and unhurt, and was young and very beautiful. She was also very wealthy, for she was the only daughter of the gentleman who owned the park in which she had been walking. It appeared that she had no knowledge that the bull was there, and that he had made his way from another field through a damaged fence into the park. He had rushed upon her before she had time to escape; but, with great presence of mind, she had flung herself upon the ground, cover-

ing herself with her scarlet shawl. Its colour had scared the animal for a time, although the sight of it made him more infuriated, and it was highly probable that if the two fellow-students had been but a few minutes later in coming by that way, the bull would have made his attack upon the unfortunate young lady, and horribly gored her to death. Although well-nigh dead with fright, she had lain quite motionless until Mr. Pinkerton's fellow-student had raised her from the ground.

She was extremely grateful to her deliverers, both of whom were invited to her father's house and hospitably entertained many times during their stay in Glasgow; and on one of whom she conferred her hand and fortune in marriage. Mr. Pinkerton used to laugh when he came to the end of his anecdote, and say, "Of course, as it was chiefly through me that she owed the preservation of her life, I was the proper person to have placed the wedding-ring on her finger and her purse in my pocket; but, as the proverb says, 'Ought-to-be's don't always hatch shall-be's;' and the one of the two that the young lady married was not me, but my companion."

Mr. Pinkerton was greatly beloved by high and low. He was not an old man when he died ; but he had lived and laboured in the place long enough to be greatly regretted ; and his funeral was one of the largest that ever took place in Campbelton.





HOW MR. MACDONALD DID IN A QUARREL
INTERPOSE, AND GOT MORE THAN
A BLOODY NOSE.



THE late Rev. D. Macdonald was the minister of Killeen, and a very learned man. He was the writer of the history of the parish published in the *Statistical Account*; and was not only considered the most polite speaker of Gaelic in Cantire, but the best rehearser of anecdotes. One of these related to his father, who was also a minister of the Church of Scotland, and was as follows :—

The parishioners of the elder Mr. Macdonald were a very troublesome lot, always quarrelling and wrangling, and giving their minister a world of trouble to adjust their differences. Two of the

worst were Peter Galbraith and his wife Janet, who had no sooner made an end of one quarrel than they began another. In vain had Mr Macdonald spoken to them and threatened them with all manner of penalties; they had become so accustomed to their domestic warfare, that it seemed quite impossible for them to agree to any truce, however brief. One day, when the reverend gentleman was making his rounds, he came, in the course of his official duties, to the abode of this discordant pair. They had been having a game at their old amusement a short time before the minister came to their door, and the wife had got the worst of it. The husband, not wishing to have all the honour to himself, had withdrawn himself for a space, in order to afford his antagonist breathing time to prepare for a fresh encounter. Janet was quite ready for this, and, having barred the door, armed herself with the potato-beetle, and waited for Peter's return. She was smarting from the effects of their recent struggle, and she determined to give Peter as good, or better, than she had taken from him.

It was at this juncture of affairs that the minister



JANET'S RECEPTION OF HER MINISTER.

drew nigh to the house, and rapped at the door.

“Are you Peter?” demanded Janet.

“Yes!” replied the reverend gentleman, whose Christian name, unfortunately for him at this crisis, was the same as that possessed by Janet Galbraith’s husband.

Janet got behind the door, unbarred it, and raised the potato-beetle on high. The minister pushed open the door and entered, and immediately received a tremendous blow on the head. Happily for his sake, he had not removed his hat, and it was thick and strong, and in good condition; although, therefore, it was smashed by the blow, and driven over his eyes, yet it protected his head from being laid open.

“Woman!” cried the Minister, when he had torn his battered hat from his eyes, and had somewhat recovered from the suddenness of the attack; “woman! why hast thou thus stricken me?”

“Pardon, pardon!” cried Janet, who, of course, had found out her mistake as soon as it was too late, and had flung herself upon her knees before the minister; “when you said you was Peter, I thought it was my own man, and he had hurt

me before he went out, and I meant to give him a bit of a rap as a reminder ”

“A bit of a rap!” cried the Minister, as he rubbed his head; “why you might have killed me with that weapon. Look at my poor hat! you have quite killed that. Oh! you are a murdering woman, and must be kept in prison.”

Hearing this, Janet Galbraith was “nearly skarred oot o’ her wits, an’ skreeched oot sae lood,” that the other Peter came in to see whether murder was going on. “Murder it is!” said the Minister; “look at my hat, and it might have been my skull, though it was meant for yours.”

“He gied me a while leatherin’!” pleaded Janet.

“My mustress is waur than I!” responded Peter, in defence; “wan nicht when I war wi’ the coos in the byar, she cam’ oot o’ the hoose, an’ chased me wi’ an open knife in her haan, and skarred me terrible.”

Then Mr. Macdonald seriously admonished them, and thought it a good opportunity to frighter them into compliance with his demands for peace and he threatened that he would have them both

shut up in prison, and “persecute” (prosecute) Janet for her aggravated attack upon his hat, unless they faithfully promised to amend their ways and give over their violent quarrels. Both Janet and Peter made the promise; and it is said that they became changed characters; and that the last man whom Janet Galbraith thumped on the head was the Rev. Peter Macdonald, who, by interposing in their quarrel, had got a greater punishment than the bloody nose of *Hudibras*.





HOW THE CANTIRE MINISTER AND HIS
VIOLONCELLO TRIUMPHED OVER
PREJUDICE.



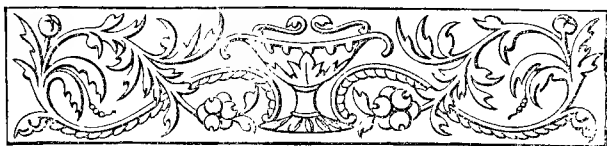
NE of the objections urged by Andrew Fairservice against the church service was directed to the “musicians playing on penny whistles, mair like a penny wedding than a sermon.” This objection was as old as the days of Knox, who, in his denunciation of the organ, pronounced it to be an impossibility for the Deity to be pleased “wi’ a kist fu’ o’ whistles ;” and the objection has been maintained by the Scotch Presbyterians up to the present time, although it is gradually melting away before the force of more genial ideas and common-sense convictions. Organs have been already in-

troduced into more than one church in Scotland ; the richest stained glass from Munich has been placed in her most perfect cathedral ; the adoption of Gothic architecture has given the *coup-de-grace* to the unsymmetrical horrors of the Puritan conventicle ; the change of posture during worship—to kneeling during prayer, and standing during singing—together with the introduction of responses, chanting, and that due proportion of liturgical forms which was sighed for by Dr. John Brown (the elder), the father and leader of the Scotch Dissenters—all these points have been discussed recently by Presbyterians, and in a manner which leads us to infer that they may, at no very distant date, be adopted.

But prejudices were very strong not so many years since, when the Church of England at Glasgow was called “the whistling kirk,” from its possession and use of an organ ; and, at an earlier period, when the Arran minister was compelled to part with his pianoforte, in deference to the opinions of his parishioners. And across Kilbrannan Sound the people were equally determined that their spiritual pastors should not deteriorate

in quality or efficiency through any sinful weakness for an instrument of music.

For there is a Cantire story told of a certain minister who was very fond of playing the violoncello, at which his elders and flock were so scandalized that they sent a deputation from the Kirk Session to wait on, and remonstrate with him. They accordingly did so, and paid their visit late in the evening. The minister received them very cordially, and prevailed on them to stay supper. After supper they talked of psalmody, and from that went on to converse about the national music of Scotland, more particularly of the beauty of one particular air, of which they were all fond. The violoncello was within reach, and the minister could not resist hugging it and playing upon it the air in question. The guests were delighted. "Surely," said the Minister, who saw the opportunity of making the application of his tuneful discourse, "surely there is no harm in that!" "Ou, no, sir!" was the reply, "it's no that wice-like thing (*i.e.* that respectable-looking thing); but it's the sma' sinfu' fiddle at we objec' till."



HOW DR. ROBERTSON ARGUED AND ACTED.



HE Rev. George Robertson, D.D., was the parish minister of the second charge in Campbelton, being the successor of that Mr. John MacAlpine, who had succeeded Mr. James Boes ; and his colleague was Dr. John Smith, the historian, who was minister of the first charge. The personal appearance of Dr. Robertson was grave and ministerial ; he was somewhat short in stature, but strongly-built and shapely ; his clothes were cut in an old fashion, and he wore a large powdered wig, knee-breeches, silk stockings, and silver shoe-buckles. In some particulars he was very eccentric, and altogether different from his colleague,

Dr. Smith. He was in the habit of visiting an old weaver named Saunders, who lived near to the manse, with whom he delighted to hold an argument. The minister was a great aristocrat, and the weaver a democrat; and their dialogue would be somewhat after this fashion.

Dr. R. Well, Saunders, my man! what think ye about this reform that we hear so much about now-a-days?

Saunders. Indeed then, sir, I think it would do much good if it would take place; we would then get cheaper food.

Dr. R. You old fool! how would you be better off under reform?

Saunders. We would be better off every way. When I buy tea I must give four times its value; the same with sugar, tobacco, snuff, soap, salt, and a great many other things that we don't want taxed.

Dr. R. Where may ye have learned about these taxes, Saunders? You would not hear it but from vain fellows who would turn the world upside down, and bring us back to heathenism, and heaven knows what beside! Let me hear no more of this matter from you.

Saunders. I was in the Low Country and attended meetings where these things were explained to us ; and a reverend minister of the Established Church at Balfron came over to our side.

Dr. R. But, my man, we must raise taxes for the support of our freedom. We must keep up soldiers, sailors, and ships, to protect our shores and drive back our enemies, who would take from us our church and our laws, and who would murder us all ; and people who hold such horrid sentiments as you, Saunders, would deservedly be their first victims.

Such would be their disputes ; and both Saunders and the Minister always held their own opinions, and however much they argued, always left off where they began.

Harm came to the Doctor's only child ; and when he was taunted with it, he replied, " If the fox cannot get at the sheep, he will try to get the lamb." Dr. Robertson was a learned man in the pulpit ; but his voice was low and hollow, and his delivery unattractive. When he was called upon by his parishioners on business, they were generally

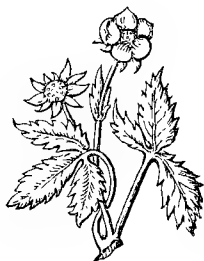
received with an angry word ; but before the interview was over, he would calm down, and be very kind to them. Two men went to him one day, to ask him for money to procure a coffin for an aged pauper woman, who had died in a neighbour's house. " Bury her without a coffin," replied the Doctor, gruffly. The men told him that they would bring the corpse to his door, and there leave it. But, as they went away, he called after them, and gave them the price of the coffin. A great deal of this must be attributed to his scrupulous care for the poor's money collected at the church, and placed at his disposal.

Dr. Robertson was once at Edinburgh, at the Commission of Assembly, when two candidates were proposed to fill a vacant charge, and it was agreed that the better scholar of the two would be preferred to get the church and its emoluments. One of the candidates had wealthy and influential friends, but the other was a young man who had struggled with the direst poverty while he was getting his studies. He was advised to go humbly to the learned Dr. Robertson, and get a lesson from him. So he went to the Doctor's lodging, and

stated his case and his wishes. Then the Doctor put three questions to him in theology, but not one of the questions could the young man answer. Then the Doctor took a walk with him, and taught him the three great questions perfectly. The examination took place, and it was proposed by the Assembly that the old Doctor should put the finishing questions to the candidates. He began by asking the rich young man one of those three questions that he had been teaching the other candidate, and he could not answer a word of it. The Doctor then put the question to the poor young man, who, to the surprise of the meeting, replied to the question in the readiest and most learned way. It was just the same with the other two questions; and the end of it was that the poor young man gained the day. The proverb says that there is roguery in all trades; and we cannot say that the Doctor was free from it in this instance, though he may have considered that the end justified the means.

But though he had his faults and peculiarities—as, indeed, who has not?—he was a good, pious man, and was deservedly respected and esteemed.

He filled the second charge to the satisfaction of his parishioners for more than fifty years, and died at Campbelton, at a good old age, and was buried at Kilkerran.





HOW THE REV. DONALD KELLY STOLE A SERMON

THE Rev. Donald Kelly, the learned author of the "Statistical Account of the Parish of Southend, Cantire," was ordained to Southend, June 12, 1816, and transferred to Campbelton, January 23, 1833.*

It was said of Bishop Jewel that his powers of

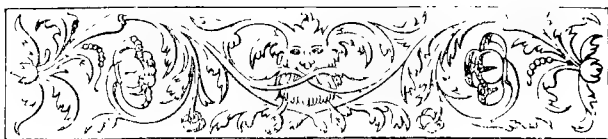
* At a meeting of the Established Presbytery of Kintyre, held at the Presbytery House, Castlehill, Campbelton, in 1863, there was produced to the court a very interesting document, giving a record of the Nairne family and peerage, and showing that the family of the late Rev. Donald Kelly, A.M., of Campbelton, claim that peerage after the present holders of it.

memory were so prodigious, that, when once he had read over a sermon, he could correctly repeat it, without omitting or altering a word. The Rev. Donald Kelly possessed a similarly retentive and powerful memory, by means of which his pulpit preparations were materially lightened.

On a certain occasion he went from Southend to Campbelton, to assist Dr. Allan MacNaughton in the Sacramental services. It was arranged that Mr. Kelly should preach on the Saturday, and Dr. MacNaughton on the Sunday. For this purpose the Southend minister arrived at his colleague's manse on the Friday, and in the evening was sitting in the study with the Doctor, when the latter was called out of the room to attend upon a sick person, and was detained a considerable time. Meanwhile Mr. Kelly had spied a professional-looking manuscript lying on his host's desk, and beguiled the time by reading it. It proved to be a most excellent sermon, prepared by the Doctor with much care and study, and intended for delivery on the ensuing Sabbath. The Doctor returned, and placed his manuscript in his desk, under lock and key, Mr. Kelly keeping silence on the subject.

But on the following morning, when Mr. Kelly had to preach, the Doctor's intense surprise and chagrin may be conceived when he heard his friend delivering his own sermon, *ipsissimis verbis*, from the beginning to the very end. And it was a further mortification to him to hear the preacher receiving great credit for his admirable discourse, while he himself had to hastily hash up the mangled remains of his own composition, so as to put it into a new shape for his next day's sermon.





HOW THE GIGHA MINISTER GAVE CANTIRE MEASURE.

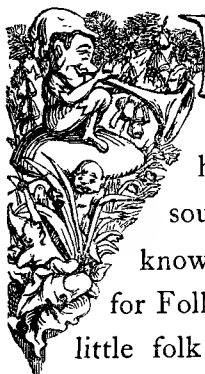
THERE was a minister in Gigha, who, when he came out of church, was accustomed to ask various members of his congregation how they liked his sermon. One day, when he had put this question, he received for a reply the remark, "It was terribly long."

"True, true, my friend," observed the Minister; "but we give seventeen pecks to the boll here in everything, good Cantire measure."

"Yes," was the reply, "to make up for chaff and bad cleaning."



FAIRIES, FERNS, AND FOXGLOVES.

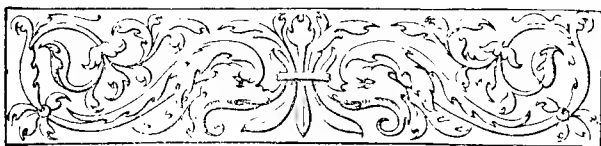


FAIRIES, Ferns, and Foxgloves, form an alliterative combination of words that is perfectly harmonious in sense as well as in sound. Foxgloves, indeed, we all know to be merely the vulgar corruption for Folks'-gloves, that is, the gloves of the little folk or Fairies; and as for Ferns, we know that fern-seed is the fairy charm to produce invisibility. The beautiful fronds and coronals of ferns have also been called "the Devil's brushes," though they are employed against, and not for diabolical agency, and are supposed to be serviceable in sweeping a house free from evil spirits.

The Ferns and Foxgloves, taken in connection with Fairies, naturally direct our thoughts to the little folk as rural people who delight in woods and copses and sequestered glens, and who separate themselves from the domestic Lares and Penates, whose habitation is in towns and cities of freestone or red brick. And as green is the distinctive colour of the country, representing its verdure, whether of blade or leaf, so the Cantire Fairies are usually represented as being not only dwellers in green hills and mounds, but also as being clad in green clothes, and sometimes wearing conical green caps, like the *clogadan* that the Highland children weave with rushes. An instance of this is given in the following Cantire story, which, together with those that follow, have been communicated to me by friends who took them down from the lips of the Gaelic-speaking peasantry, with whom Fairy tales are special favourites. Like the other stories and legends in this book, they are here published for the first time, and are probably rescued from the oblivion to which the great change of manners and customs now taking place in Cantire might soon have condemned them.

The first story, it will be seen, has an intensely national flavour about it. Bagpipes could nowhere else be the centre of interest and attraction than in a Highland tale.





THE PIPER AND THE LITTLE GREEN MAN



THIS was how Macruimean, the piper, got his music. He was ploughing one day near to a haunted hill, with his servant-man driving the horses. It being in March, and the days long, the young man felt the sensation of hunger, and said to his master, "I wish that one of the little folks of the hill would come out to me with a *ceapaire* (oatmeal cake) spread over with butter and cheese."

In a short time he had even as he wished. A little creature, very neatly dressed in green clothes, came out of the hill, with a beautiful *ceapaire* in his hands, and, tripping up to the young man, said, "Here is the *ceapaire* for which you were wish

ing.” But the young man refused to accept it; whereupon the little creature struck it on the young man’s cheek, and there it stuck, and could not be taken off.

Then the little creature said to Macruimean, “Come thou with me, honest man, and I will show thee what we are doing in the hill.”

So Macruimean went with him, a door being opened, above which Macruimean left his knife. And when they went in, Macruimean was delighted and astonished to see the little folks working at every trade imaginable, in splendid workshops.

“Now,” says the little guide to Macruimean, “which of these trades would you wish to be?”

Macruimean saw a beautiful pair of bagpipes on a table, and said, “I would wish to be a Piper.”

The little guide presented the bagpipes to him, telling him “that so long as any parts of the instrument remained either with him or his offspring, they would continue to be the best pipers in Scotland.” Macruimean came away with his prize, and found his servant-man standing at the horses, with the *ceapaire* fastened to his cheek.

“Take away the knife from the door of the hill,” said the Fairy.

“Not until you release my servant of his spell,” said Macruimean.

So this was done, and Macruimean took with him his knife, and the door closed, and the hill appeared in its usual state. Then Macruimean blew up his pipes, and he found that he could play any tune, and that he could be heard at a great distance ; and it was a proverb in the Highlands, *Co ard ri Pìob mhoir Mic-Chruimean*, “as loud as Macruimean’s pipes.”





FAIRY HILLS.



THE Fairy hills mentioned in the preceding story were called *Sioth-anan*, or *Sioth-dhunan*, or more briefly, *Si'uns*, "the hill (hillock, or mound) of peace," and they are supposed to have derived their names from the hillocks to which the Druids were wont to go for purposes of arbitration,* which hillocks of peace became thenceforth invested with supernatural virtues. The Fairies were also known as the Daoine shee, or "men of peace," *i.e.* "good fellows," although a *sheech* free from malevolence and mischief was a great rarity ;

* The Druids had the name of Curetes, or *Co'retich*, "peace-makers."

so much so that they were popularly supposed to be the offspring of the fallen angels, and to have retained no small share of their ancestral reputation for bad deeds. Their Fairy hills were called *Tomhans* and *Shian*, and were supposed to possess great internal comforts, with doors and windows that could only be discovered on dark evenings, by the bright light of the fairy fires shining through the artfully-constructed apertures. The chief Fairy hill was known as *Tom-na-furich*, and formed the rendezvous for the fairy bands on stated occasions.

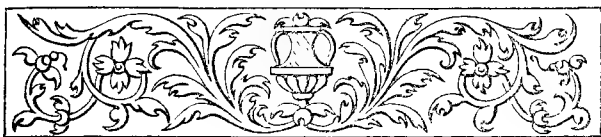
The Druids' hills and the Fairy hills soon came to mean the same thing. One of these hills was known as *Crom-shlia'*, or "the hill of bending," and had probably been a Druidical place of worship, to which ideas of awe had consequently been affixed; and these feelings, in process of time, were transferred and ascribed to the Fairies. The magical light that blazed from the Fairy hills on dark evenings, was but a reminiscence of the *Dru'lan*, or *Dru'lanach*, "the flash or flame of the Druids;" and even from the Druidical *Sioth-dhunan*, or "hill of peace," which was afterwards

a Fairy hill, the *Samh-thein*, or “fire of peace,” was sent forth from the consecrated flame. And thus the awe that had been inspired at these places by the Druidical ceremonies that were conducted there, lingered for many centuries after those ceremonies had been abolished and forgotten, and the origin of the notion of Fairies was then annexed to these mounts, from which the Fairies themselves derived their names of *Daoine shee*, or *Sithichean*, “the men of peace,” or “the men who dwell in the mount of reconciliation.” These mounts were generally situated on the boundaries between different clans and possessions, and probably contributed much to maintain among them peace and good neighbourhood. These “hills of peace,” in some sort, had their representatives in scriptural times, and bore some similitude to the Fauni Termini, the Mercurial heaps and pillars, and those of the old Ethiopians and Arabs.*

* Mr. J. F. Campbell, in considering the widely-spread class of stories in which are fairies, fairy-hills, elf-shots, &c., is “persuaded of the former existence of a race of men in these islands, who were smaller in stature than the Celts, who used stone arrows, lived in conical mounds, like the Lapps, knew

some mechanical arts, pilfered goods and stole children, and were perhaps contemporary with some species of wild cattle and horses, and great auks, which frequented marshy ground, and are now remembered as water-bulls, and water-horses, and boobries, and such like impossible creatures. I leave it to ethnologists and geologists to say whether this popular supernatural history has any bearing upon modern discoveries; whether it may not be referred to the same period as the lake habitations of Switzerland, Denmark, Ireland, and the Scotch Isles; the sepulchral chambers containing human remains, and surrounded by bones which appear to be those of animals now extinct; the works of art in the drift, and the relics of fossil men."—*West Highland Tales*, IV. 344.





NERE is another story connected with a fairy hill, one of which is pointed out at Carskay, on the Mull of Cantire, and concerning which a lady tells me that she, when a young girl, was afraid to pass it at night for fear of the fairies.

THE OLD COUPLE AT THE FAIRIES' SPEAKING HILL.

NEAR to the Salt-pans is a farm called *Croc-a-chaint*, or "The Speaking Hill;" so called because people often heard there the conversations of the little folks. It was thought that this hill was inhabited by the fairies, who diverted themselves in feasting, dancing, and music; and the people who lived near the hill imagined, and often main-

tained, that at certain seasons they saw the hill opened and illuminated with light, and the little folks within it indulging in their merry dance and feast. Some people supposed these fairies to be fallen angels who had lost their first estate ; but others imagined them to be happy, friendly creatures, and quite harmless.

A curious old couple lived at *Cnoc-a-chaint* farm, not so many hundred years ago, and they were firm believers in the fairies, and would often talk of the things they had heard and seen in "The Speaking Hill." They were not more superstitious than their neighbours, nor were they more ignorant. They sometimes conversed about futurity ; and one night they had a long conversation about death and the great day of judgment. The old man wished to be buried with his friends in Kilkivan, and the wife wished to lie with her own friends in Kilkenzie ; and they agreed that when they rose from their graves they should meet on Machrihanish shore.

But a barrier appeared before them. "What will we do," said the old man, "if the weather be wet, and the river swelled so that I cannot get

over?" His old wife was also puzzled at this idea ; and as they could not hit upon any plan to surmount the difficulty, they settled that it would be better for them to be buried together, so that they might rise in company with each other in the future world.





HOW THE FAIRIES BEHAVE AT THE BIRTHS OF MORTALS.



THAT fairies or supernatural beings had the power to carry away not only infants, but even women in childbed, leaving something in their place, was a general belief among the credulous in Cantire; and many stories are told relating to incidents of this kind. Here is a sample.

A man whose *Bonheen* (sick wife) was taken in labour went in search of a doctor; but being detained till midnight, as he was returning home he heard a peculiar sound coming near to him in the air. He threw his knife at it; when, to his surprise, his own wife fell down beside him. He carried her to a neighbouring house; and when

he got home, his supposed wife crying out, he caught hold of her out of the bed, and threw her on to the fire, when, instead of burning there, she flew up through the vent in a lump of fire.





THE FAIRY CHANGELING.



F old, a certain woman who lived on the Island of Gigha, had a son who did not grow any from the day of his birth, and continued to be very troublesome to his mother, demanding great attention from her, and always wanting to be nursed in her bosom, or rocked in a cradle. He could speak, and cry, and weep bitterly ; but he could not stand.

One day, when he was about twelve years of age, his mother went out, leaving him in charge of a neighbour lad to take care of him during her absence. But after she had gone out, the dwarfling spake to the lad, and said, “ If you will not tell my mother, I will play you a tune of music.” With that he plucked up some of the straws from underneath

him in his cradle, and with them played the most beautiful music that ever was heard, until his mother came back, when the dwarfling began his crying and weeping. The neighbour lad did not conceal the secret, but told the mother that the child was a fairy changeling that had been left in the stead of her own infant.

A council was thereupon held by the people of the island, when similar incidents were mentioned ; and it was decided that the dwarfling should be thrown over the *Creag bhan*, or “White Rock,” a precipitous hill about 340 feet above the sea level. They then carried him up the hill to the top of the precipice, and from thence flung him into the sea. And to this day the precipice is called *Creag-an-t-siochaire*, “The Rock of the Dwarf, or Fairy.”

These Gigha people do not appear to have known the *recipe* that was proper to be used on such occasions. It was this:—If the child has been stolen, take the “stock,” or changeling, to a place where three rivers or three counties meet, and there leave it. The fairies will then come for their own stock in the night, and will restore the

child. They were believed to steal the children in order that they might pay them as their yearly tribute to the Evil One, instead of using their own children for this purpose.





FAIRY CHARMS.



T was the custom in Cantire, when a woman was in childbed, that her women neighbours should sit up with her through several nights, in order to scare away any of the fairies who might take a fancy to the new-born infant ; and that this might be done the more effectually, the Bible was laid under the woman's head, to protect both herself and her offspring from the fairies' power.

When the woman was drawing near to the time of her delivery, she would walk three times round a sacred building, beginning at the east point, and following the course of the sun southward. This was believed to be an effectual charm for procuring an easy delivery ; and sick persons would also do

the same to charm back health. People would also walk sunwise three times round a person to whom they wished good luck ; and on setting sail would put the boat about three times sunwise. This ceremony was called *deas iul*, “the south way,” or “way of the south,” and was a relic of Druidical worship. It implied the readiness of the person who performed the ceremony to follow the will of God in the same manner as they did the sun, which they considered to be his image, but merely the symbol of his existence. Their name for the sun — *Grian*, or *Grè'ine*, in the oblique cases, from *Gré* and *'heine*, the *nature or essence of fire*—guarded their worshippers against taking it for the Deity, or for anything else than a created thing. Their pleasant paradise was *Flath-innis*, “the island of the brave or virtuous ;” a word still used in the Gaelic to denote “Heaven.” But their hell, instead of being a place of fiery torment, was a region of intense cold, to which they gave the name of *Isurin*, “the isle of the cold land or climate,” which word, very singularly, continues to this day to be the only Gaelic word for “Hell.” The Druids taught that the vehicle for the soul's

flight to *Flath-innis* was a meteor ; and hence the Highlanders believed that the appearance of meteors, to which they gave the name *Dre'ug*, portended death. This is also an Arab belief.





“WAY OF THE SOUTH.”



THE phrase “Way of the South,” or “Going by the South,” therefore, showed the desire for success ; but the *car-tua’ iul*, or the going round the circle northward, was, on the contrary, held to be disastrous ; and, as such, it became a Druidical imprecation, and passed into a proverb.

Indeed, so greatly was this “Way of the South” thought to be the lucky way, that when an infant or child was being choked with its food, its nurse—in great alarm lest the food should take the *tua’l*, turn and go the wrong way—would at once pronounce the magical word. *deas iul*, “way of the south,” in order to give it the right direction. In consumptive complaints they would cut the finger

and toe nails of the patient, and place the parings in a bag, which they would pass three times round his or her head, saying *Deas iul*, “way of the south,” and then bury the bag in a secret place. This charm was considered to be sufficiently efficacious to restore the patient to health.

Miorbhuil, “marvel,” is also another word which has lost its former signification, which, according to the late Dr. Smith of Campbelton, was *neur-Be-uil*, “the finger of the life of all,” *i.e.* God. *Be-uil* was also used to signify “the sun.” *La Be-uil-dhuin*, “the day of life to all of us,” was May-day, still called *Lath Bealtainn*.

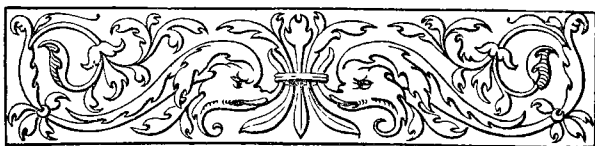
There were some other popular phrases or exclamations, which, till lately, were in familiar use in Cantire. The angry threat *Conter achd ort*, “Dog on you!” or “Dog and Cat on you!” is said to have had its rise in the days when the Macdonalds were hunted with blood-hounds. Two other phrases were, “By the Book!” and, “By the Great Mary!”

The former phrase of *An Leabhar*, “the Book,” was merely an equivalent to such expressions as “indeed,” “by the way,” &c. A good old matron

reproved her son for his continual repetition of this phrase, but could not induce him to abandon its use ; so one day she beat him, saying to him, “ Will you say *An leabhar* again ? ” to which the poor culprit blubbered out, “ *An leabhar*, I will not ! ” An anecdote that reminds us of the father of Dr. Watts correcting his son for verse-making, and the child appealing to him with the couplet :—

“ Dear father, do some pity take,
And I will no more verses make.”





FAIRY-DARTS, ELF-SHOTS, AND FAIRY-EGGS.

JANET KELVIE was a very superstitious old woman, who lived not far from Kilkerran. She believed in all manner of witchcraft, and in the power of the little folk called Fairies, or *shuagh*.

I once saw her having a number of Fairy-darts or Elf-shots, to which she attached great value, as she believed them to possess the virtue of healing sick cows and other beasts. These Elf-shots were made of hard flint, very nicely carved, which, Janet said, was not the work of human hands, but was done by the fairies, who shot them at men and beasts.* She said that she was working in the

* The fairies were believed to form and sharpen them from

field one day, and heard something pass by her that sounded like a bumclock ; she heard it strike the ground, and when she went to the spot she found it to be an Elf-shot that the fairies had discharged at her, but had missed her.

Indeed, Janet Kelvie did not stand alone in this belief in the Fairy-darts or Elf-shots, for it was the general belief among the Cantire peasantry that the fairies had power to shoot human beings and animals ; and this was called *Urachaid*. It was believed that the persons or animals who were struck by the darts could be cured only by charms, which were nothing else than Irish rhymes, and evidently popish.

Perhaps these Fairy-darts were, in reality, old arrow-heads that had been used in battle centuries ago, and were turned up by the plough, for they were evidently formed by hand. I was acquainted with another old woman, who possessed some of these Elf-shots, and who pretended that she had got charms that would cure *Urachaid*. I crept

the flint, and the arch fiend did the finishing or dighting. They were also shot at mortals, and were among the charm used by Lady Foulis. See Sir W. Scott's *Demonology*, v. and ix, for their use by Isobel Gowdie and others.

into favour with her by making her presents of tobacco, of which she was very fond ; for she was a great smoker, and had come across the water from Ireland. I asked her to teach me her charms, to which she agreed. I got pen and paper and wrote them down; but I found them to be nothing more than verses of Irish Gaelic poetry, in which were the names of Patern, Colomba, St. Peter, Paul, John, and all the others; and as it was so evidently popish superstition, I did not think it right to preserve such verses; I therefore burnt them: but I can assure you that there was nothing like a charm in it, or what people who knew Irish Gaelic would not understand; but, with those who did not know the language, it had all the mysterious power of the unintelligible.

Thus far my informant, who, with regard to the Fairy-darts being flint arrow-heads, was of the same opinion as Brand, who thus mentions them in his *Popular Superstitions*. They are also mentioned by the Poet Collins, who, although he had not visited Scotland, proved, by his beautiful “Ode on the Popular Superstitions of Scotland,” that he had “got up” his subject with painstaking care:—

“ ’Tis Fancy’s land to which thou sett’st thy feet,
Where still, ’tis said, the fairy people meet,
Beneath each birken shade, on mead or hill.
There each trim lass that skims the milky store,
To the swart tribes their creamy bowls allots ;
By night they sip it round the cottage door,
While airy minstrels warble jocund notes.
There every herd, by sad experience, knows
How, wing’d with fate, their elf-shot arrows fly,
When the sick ewe her summer food foregoes,
Or stretch’d on earth the heart-smit heifers lie.
Such airy beings awe the untutor’d swain.”

Stewart, in his “Popular Superstitions of the Highlands,” speaks of the “magical dart, commonly called an elf-bolt,” and says, “These bolts are of various sizes, of a hard yellowish substance, resembling somewhat the flint, for which they are no bad substitutes. The bolt is very frequently of the shape of a heart, its edges being indented like a saw, and very sharp at the point. This deadly weapon the wicked fairy will throw at man or beast, with such precision as seldom to miss his aim, and, whenever it hits, the stroke is fatal. Such is the great force with which it is flung, that on its striking the object, it instantaneously perforates it to the heart, and a sudden death is the consequence. In the blinking of an eye, a man or an ox is struck down cold dead, and, strange to

say, the wound is not discernible to an ordinary person, unless he is possessed of the charm that enables some wise people to trace the course of the bolt, and ultimately discover it in the dead body."

The nailing up of a horse-shoe over a door, or on the mast of a boat, was considered a Cantire preservative against the intrusion of Fairies; just as in England it was deemed a safe precaution against witchcraft, or the entrance of the Evil One, who is frequently (especially in Germany) represented with the feet of a horse. The Pentagramma, or "Druid's foot," was the ancient *fuga demonium*; and when incised on a door-step, no evil spirits could cross the threshold.

Washed by the Gulf-stream across the great Atlantic, beans, nuts, and seeds are picked up on the western shore of Cantire, that have been wafted thither from tropical climes.* These, when picked up, are carefully preserved, and often worn as amulets or charms. They are always called "Fairy-eggs," and it is believed that they will ward off the malevolence of the evil-disposed fairies.

Fairies of another class, however, were the—

* According to Hugh Miller and Dr. Patrick Neill, the larger beans or seeds are those from the *Mimosa scandens*, and the smaller from the *Dolichos urens*, from the West Indies.



BROWNIES.



IN olden time the Brownie was looked upon as a regular appendage to a respectable family, and no one of any position could affect to do without his services. Like the gout, the Brownie belonged to the upper classes. Martin, in his "Western Islands," says, "It is not long since every family of any considerable substance in these Islands, was haunted by a spirit they called Brownie, which did several sorts of work. Brownie was frequently seen in all the most considerable families in these isles and north of Scotland, in the shape of a tall man." All agree as to the good offices of Brownie, whose character and overthrow are thus described by Dr. Johnson, in his Hebridean tour :—"Brownie

was a sturdy fairy, who, if he was fed and kindly treated, would, as they say, do a great deal of work. They now pay him no wages, and are content to labour for themselves." The Brownie was evidently the counterpart of Milton's "lubbar-fiend," Robin Goodfellow.

Dr. John Smith, the historian of Cantire, was of opinion that the belief in these Brownies arose from the frequent mention of protecting *genii*, in the old Ossianic poems, in which, as in the Homeric narratives, the most distinguished families and heroes are placed under the immediate protection of some tutelary deity. And from their familiarity with these *genii*, the Highlanders easily passed to the belief that every family-seat or house of distinction was inhabited by one or two supernatural beings, who watched over the affairs of the household, and punished the servants for their misdemeanours. And what gave still more weight to this opinion were the corrections frequently bestowed on servants in the dark, the effects of which sometimes showed that they did not proceed from such "unreal mockeries."



THE BROWNIE OF LARGIE.



HERE were several Brownies in Cantire during the time of the MacDonalds ; and the most famous of these was the Largie Brownie, which had the welfare of the MacDonalds greatly at heart. He employed himself at night in lightening the labours of the domestic servants, and was exceedingly orderly in his habits. He had an especial interest in the children of the chief, and was constantly at the bedside of sleepy-headed nurses, in case the baby might fall out of the bed.

One of the MacDonald Lockharts of Largie having built a barge, called it "The Brownie." No boat that competed with it ever equalled it in speed—a circumstance which was attributed by the

country people to the aid of the real Brownie, which, they affirmed, was known to have raised up “sea-dykes” to obstruct other boats, but had made all smooth before his namesake.

The Brownie has taken a fit of absence since the advent of the present generation.





LITTLE-MOUTH.



THE Brownie of the MacNeils of Carskey, Cantire, was known by the peculiar name of *Beag-bheul*, or Little-mouth, and is mentioned, together with a popular story, in *Glencreggan*,* where it is called “a familiar spirit, who talked to the Laird, and took great care of him and his property.” One of my Cantire informants has, since then, made this note for my benefit :

“This supernatural creature, *Beag-bheul*, or Little-mouth, was said to keep company with the Laird of Carskie. He was an officer in the

* Vol. I. p. 97.

army and fought in several battles; and, it was said that, after the battles, he would shake out the bullets of the enemy from the skirts of his clothes, Little-mouth preventing the bullets from injuring the gentleman. It was said that the creature had the appearance of a lady. It was said that she was very careful of Carskie's house and cattle; and that she rode behind him when he was from home and had a conversation. It is quite possible that Carskie knew the art of ventriloquism, which could make some believe that he was conversing with the *Beag-bheul*."

Another Cantire correspondent, writing in 1863, speaks of the *Beag-bheul* thus: She (Little-mouth) is a spirit who, tradition says, has attended the Carskey family from time immemorial, and watched over their interests. She is believed by the Highlanders still to exist, and to have a special care of the Laird of Carskey; and there is a room in the house which the country people still believe that Little-mouth inhabits." This testimony of my informant helps to prove that the Cantire popular belief in the Brownie continued up to the year 1863. Sir Walter Scott, in his *Demonology and*

Witchcraft, states that “the last place in the south of Scotland supposed to have been honoured or benefited by the residence of a Brownie, was Bodsbeck, in Moffatshire, which has been the subject of an entertaining tale by Mr. James Hogg.” This shows that the belief in the Brownie lingers in Wild Cantire longer, perhaps, than elsewhere in Scotland.

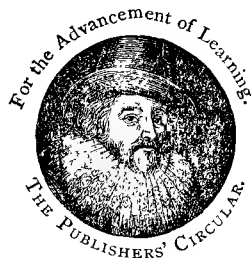
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